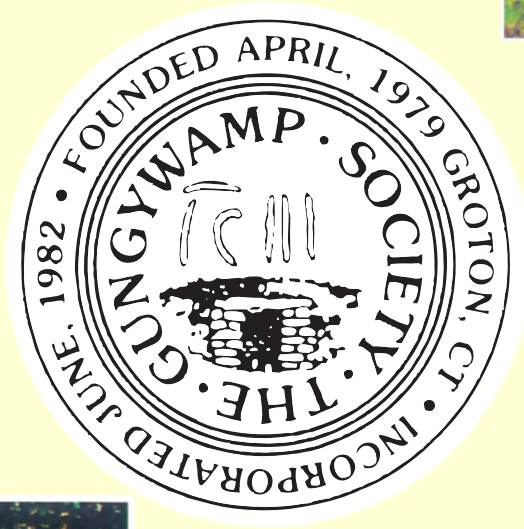


THE GREATER GUNGYWAMP

2016 Expanded Edition



By

David P. Barron and Sharon Mason
Special Supplement by Vance Tiede

Compilation by



Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center

109 Pequotsepos Road / 162 Greenmanville Ave

Mystic, CT 06355

Includes selected Gungywamp Society Stonewatch Newsletters

Fifth Printing
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Forward for the 2017 Edition

The Gungywamp range is an area in southeast Connecticut with rugged rocky ridges, outcrops, glacial erratic boulders, streams and swamps. The landscape has been used by people for thousands of years but has not experienced the radical changes of urban and suburban development so prevalent nearby. Evidence of the oldest use is the hardest to find and document. Knowledge of the cultural and spiritual practices of paleo peoples is extremely difficult to uncover.

Investigation of Native American use of Gungywamp is a very exciting line of inquiry. They were not a stationary people. They had a home territory maintained by strength against neighbors. But many had oral histories of migrations and splitting up of groups as they moved in search of an uncontested place to live. The most recent native american use was by the Pequot, Mohegan and Niantic tribes.

This edition of The Gungywamp Book is a compilation of the 1998 edition plus a selection of *STONEWATCH* newsletters that were produced by the Gungywamp Society between 1998 and 2006. We believe they contain a wealth of information on the history, people and activities surrounding the Gungywamp sites. They also include descriptions of regional stone structures. All photographs were from the 1990 version. Photographs in the *STONEWATCH* newsletters are assumed to be prior to the date of their annual publication date.

In 2010, the Gungywamp Society approached the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center* (DPNC) to conduct tours of the sites of archaeological interest at Gungywamp. Since then, DPNC has conducted both public and private tours to interested persons and parties. DPNC usually hosts several public walks each year and many more private guided walks.

The land at the sites is partly in private ownership and the rest was once owned by the Southeastern Connecticut YMCA. The YMCA in Norwich closed permanently leaving the State of Connecticut as the receiver. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has asked DPNC to continue as stewards of the trails and sites until further management evolves.

Current land ownership and parcel boundaries can be checked at the Groton, CT Geographic Information Systems (GIS) by going to <http://maps.groton-ct.gov>.

We include the Special Supplement by Vance Tiede, Prof of Archaeology at Yale University on archaeoastronomy. For further information on the astronomical alignments at Gungywamp and similar sites can be found at:

<https://yale.academia.edu/VanceTiede/Conference-Presentations> including

Vance R. Tiede, MA, *Interpreting the Gungywamp: Evidence & Implications of an Irish Early Christian Papar Provenience*, Presented to the Eastern States Archaeology Federation Conference, Fitchburg, MA, 2006

* Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, 109 Pequotsepos Rd. Mystic, CT 06355 -- 860-536-1216 -- www.dpnc.org

INTRODUCTION

Strange stone bridges, corbeled chambers, meandering walls winding haphazardly over hillsides and down into bogs ... pieces of a puzzle called THE GUNGYWAMP. (For a discussion on the origin of the name refer to the author's Summary)

Who built these structures? When, and for what purpose? Are the many strange configurations of rock features (circles, avenues of standing stones, a boat-shaped cairn) the remains of a Colonial farmstead? An Amerindian ritual site? Or, cryptic ruins left by a people who crossed the ocean and briefly occupied this coastal woodland setting hundreds of years before the Vikings, before Columbus? Perhaps many cultural time periods overlap at this site.

The Gungywamp's rich history, like any puzzle, is being reconstructed with persistent effort and thought. Only after many hundreds of hours of research, both in and out of the field, is a picture beginning to form. With painstaking ... and sometimes backbreaking ... clearing, surveying, excavating, and recording, we are beginning to understand the parameters of the Greater Gungywamp itself. We are looking at a time period somewhere between the 5th and 7th Century AD. This span of time announced itself by way of radio carbon dates, stylistic stone carvings, and architectural features known to have their origins in the British Isles.

For those of us engaged in piecing this puzzle together, it is sometimes a frustrating labor of love, but love nonetheless. Although we seek to understand her enigmas, the Gungywamp is not often a yielding companion. It is our hope that, with time and tenacity, she will surrender, from her complex of hills, cliffs, bogs, and ledges, all the bits of this wonderful puzzle ... so that we, too, may embrace the story she holds.

To all who share our love for the past, we offer this book. We hope that it will serve you well, both as a Guide to the Gungywamp and as a catalyst to further pique your interest in helping to solve this ENIGMA.

The Authors

A personal addendum - My grandfather, Albert W. Burrows, of Old Mystic, CT., was distantly related to the Lathams who owned the old farmhouse and land in the southwest corner of the Gungywamp. One summer day, somewhere between 1939 and 1942, he took me to cousin Latham's farm in his ancient Graham Page sedan. After completing his business there, he suggested that we take "a little walk in the woods to see the Fox Den." I was only eight or ten years old at the time and the idea of actually seeing a fox was too much to pass up! To make a long story short, we hiked along the cranberry bogs, crossed the earthen dam and climbed up a steep 65' escarpment. He was still sprightly, even at the age of 82. The so-called Fox Den turned out to be a large, man-made stone chamber, the one we now call Chamber One. Of course, in those days no one knew the origins of the structure, with grandpa shrugging his shoulders and indicating that it had been here longer than anyone could remember. "Maybe it was the Indians," he commented, "but I doubt it."

Fast forward some fifty years and my wife and I are being guided through the Gungywamp by Carl Vogt, I, on a drizzly spring morning. He brought us to Chamber One and I recognized it as the place I had seen as a child. Carl knew of my fascination with what he called the Stone Caves. After that magical visit, I returned home and, in the weeks to come, wrote a 350 page novel *The Gungywamp*. After a dozen rejection slips from publishers I

finally put the manuscript on a shelf to gather dust, but my psyche had been stimulated and, when a group of us met in Old Mystic at the Indian and Colonial Research Center, I gladly accepted the Presidency Pro Tem of a new organization, **Friends of the Gungywamp**, which, a year later turned out to be **The Gungywamp Society**. Having had a scientific education, I was most skeptical of the claims some of the others had that the place was truly ancient in its origins. However, after nearly five years of researching the history, topography, and various sites, my attitude melded into a position of cautious acceptance.

Professional archaeologists, university and college professors, and even some die-hard Colonialists presented their arguments that the area was nothing more than an “exotic Colonial Farmstead.” In answering their statements we undertook dozens of excavations, screened historic records, and, over a period of time, rebutted their stands with solid facts. Yes, now that I look back on it, the past twenty years have taught me patience, objectivity, and ... faith. I had an early exposure to archaeological methodology from the age of twelve when I dug up part of our back lawn, in Washington, D.C., for a Victory Garden. There I found my four B’s: a lead bullet, a bullet mold, a belt buckle, and a bayonet. Years later I dug with the grande dame of local archaeology, Eva Butler, and then again with an old maverick archaeologist by the name of Wilkins, or Wilkinson, out in Indiana. Now the many enigmas associated with the Gungywamp had sunk their claws into my psyche and I came to believe that, indeed, the Gungywamp had had serial occupations over the centuries.

The time frame which announced itself as really ancient gave us a window of opportunity somewhere between the **Fifth and Seventh Century A.D.**

So, perhaps my grandpa shouldn’t be blamed too harshly for not knowing the origins of his cousin Latham’s Fox Den after all.

- David P. Barron

More personal notes - It has been my joy, during the last several years, to guide groups of students, teachers, and scouts along the trails of the Gungywamp. In sharing with them the many sites within the Complex, I have also been privileged to share the sense of wonder that pervades this special site.

It has also been my blessing, from time to time, to wander along these trails for no other reason than to feel the peace that is so much a part of this remarkable woodland area.

No less wonderful has been my association with David Barron, working in the Gungywamp office, doing field work, and writing and revising this guidebook. David is a delight and, to me, there are few things more wonderful than the company of a good-humored, kind, and intelligent friend. Like attributes I have also found among members of the Society, and particularly those who serve on the Board of Directors.

Percy Bysshe Shelly wrote, “I love tranquil solitude and such society as is quiet, wise and good.”

In my years of membership in the Gungywamp Society I have been afforded both. I ask only one blessing more: at least twenty more years of the same!

- Sharon Mason

Ed Notes - Were it not for Sharon’s insistence, this guidebook would never have seen the light of day. Calmly, with the confidence of a true professional, she insisted that I put down in writing my memories, interpretations, and facts, for the consumption of readers. I owe Sharon much love and respect. DPB

DIRECTIONS

North Gungywamp Road is an unpaved private road. Please do not trespass.

Unaccompanied tours - For those experienced hikers who prefer to explore the Gungywamp Complex on their own, the following instructions apply.

1. Be sure to refer to the following page **A WORD OF CAUTION** and become thoroughly familiar with its contents.
2. **Drivers** - Finding the entrance to the former YMCA property may present some problems if you don't follow directions.

Northbound, 1-95: Cross the Thames River toward the Groton side, but **stay in the left lane** as it exits directly into **Rte. 184**. Go through 4 traffic lights. At the fifth light, make a **left turn** onto **Gungywamp Road**.* Go an "Irish Mile" up and over the hilly range, until you descend on a slow left curve at the bottom. There is a **bar gate** at the entrance to the former YMCA property. **Stop here** and find a suitable place to park. Do not park on the paved apron (this is a FIRE LANE). You may park on the grass off the roadway. Lock your vehicle.

Southbound, 1-95: Exit 88. At bottom of ramp turn **RIGHT** onto **Rte. 117**. Go for one mile to a **LEFT TURN** onto **Rte. 184**. Go for one mile to a **RIGHT TURN** onto Gungywamp Road and follow directions above.*

3. If you are following directions from a photocopied "Directions" page, it is advised that you secure a full copy of the **Greater Gungywamp Guide** for explanations of various sites and features.
4. It takes at least an hour and a half to complete the route that comprises the tour. Allow sufficient time before dark to avoid getting lost or disoriented.
5. If you have any reservations about your ability to find your way in unfamiliar woodland territory, **DON'T**. There are many miles of unmarked trails and game trails over hundreds of acres in Groton and Ledyard. Call the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center at 860-536-1216 and arrange for a guided tour.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Areas and Owners - The Gungywamp Complex and the Greater Gungywamp areas are NOT owned by the Gungywamp Society. These properties were owned by the former Norwich YMCA and by surrounding private families. Therefore, it is of great importance that interested individuals and groups respect the rights of these property owners.

SO, PLEASE:

1. Seek a guide or knowledgeable sponsor to help you enjoy your tour. Information on guides is available through the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center [DPNC] (www.dpnc.org).

OR

2. Obtain permission to visit by contacting the local property owners.

DO

- Request a guide or obtain permission to visit the sites.
- Wear protective boots and clothing; summertime use of insect repellent needed. - Bring snacks, cameras, video equipment, sketch pads, recorders, flashlights.
- Come prepared for a 2-3 hour hike of moderate difficulty. There are no bathroom facilities.
- Stay on trails, you can get lost.
- Observe private property restrictions. Give a wide berth to any houses you see. Feel free to ask questions, make observations.
- Inquire about DPNC membership and programs.
- Try to schedule your tour after the leaves and undergrowth have thinned in the Fall, or in Spring before new growth hampers views.
- Monitor young children.
- Please carry a small trash bag to help pick up lost or discarded items of others

DON'T

- Jeopardize your safety by coming with a known medical problem which might be aggravated by a "stressful" hike. Prompt medical help is unavailable.
- Camp, build fires, or leave trash.
- Let pets or young children roam.
- Move stones or rocks.
- Enter areas with motorized vehicles or drink water from streams.
- Dig, excavate, or remove any materials, plant life, artifacts.
- Cut trees, shrubs, flowers.
- Bring firearms or weapons.
- Engage in rock climbing.
- Leave litter or debris.
- Mark, cut, or use paint on trees and stones. -Trespass into private properties designated on the map(s) showing the North Gungywamp.
- Clear new trails.

OVERVIEW

The Gungywamp, with all of her enigmas, is not a new discovery. As early as the mid-sixteen hundreds her strange array of stone walls and structures might have excited the interest of Colonial settlers. In a letter dated 30 November, 1654, John Pynchon wrote to his mentor, John Winthrop in New Haven. Following is a portion of that letter:

30 November 1654

Honored Sir;

Springfield

Understanding you are now at Newhaven, & supposing there will be opportunity from Hartford for Conveyance thither, I make bold to scribble a few lines to you . . .

*Sir I heare a report of a stonewall and strong fort * in it, made all of Stone, which is newly discovered at or neere Pequet, (presently known as the Gungywamp Range), I should be glad to know the truth of it fro your selfe, here being many strange reports about it.*

John Pynchon "

This letter was written nearly a year after the last American Indian fort had been discovered in the area. Those forts were composed of wooden stockade walls, not of stone. Today, we continue to be intrigued by the rambling stone walls, unusual stone chambers, inscriptions on rocks, standing stones, and peculiar stone bridges. We wonder just how vast a portion of the Town of Groton, Connecticut may once have held these and similar mysteries. Because modern development, age, undergrowth, and weathering have all combined to destroy or hide much evidence of past habitation, it is not realistic to suppose that we will ever know. And so it is with concern, as well as enthusiasm, that we endeavor to preserve this area called The Gungywamp.

Located in a forested region of hills, cliffs and swamps, the former YMCA and Gungywamp Society properties are over 325 acres. Surrounded on two-thirds by swamps and bogs, and protected on the other third by 65 foot cliffs, the location seems to lend itself naturally to a place of defense. Whether or not this was ever its use is debatable. Whereas some structures and rock walling have withstood the test of time and the elements, the area is largely devoid of artifacts and written history that would tell us of its past. For purposes of discovering this vital information, the Gungywamp Society was organized in 1979.

Aerial photography over the complex, accomplished in the 1980's, clearly shows the seemingly disorganized and strangely aligned nature of the walls. These are in startling contrast to the neat geometry and regularity of Colonial stonewalls on neighboring hillsides.

Ground surveying and exploration have added many acres to the original John Dodge* maps, and have greatly expanded the physical scope of the site. Over the years many excavations have been undertaken. Pottery shards, projectile points, fragments of animal bones, charcoal, and weathered inscriptions on rocks, have

helped date habitation in the area. Who these inhabitants were is not clear. It would seem, however, that this was a place of serial occupancy, visited by many different peoples. Discovering who they were, where they came from, when they arrived, and what their missions were, is a primary goal of the Gungywamp Society. As John Pynchon put it, we “should be glad to know the truth of it ...” To this end we dedicate our labors.



*(Ed. Notes - Mr. John Dodge, of Stonington, CT., an engineer and draftsman, member of the New England Antiquities Research Association, worked for many years in the 1960's and 70's on a survey and investigation of the Gungywamp property held by the YMCA. Much of his surveying was done single handedly and accomplished by 'walking' the stone walls, triangulating by rough estimate, and through continual up-dating of his data.

ORIENTATION

Ravine, Cliffs and Bogs

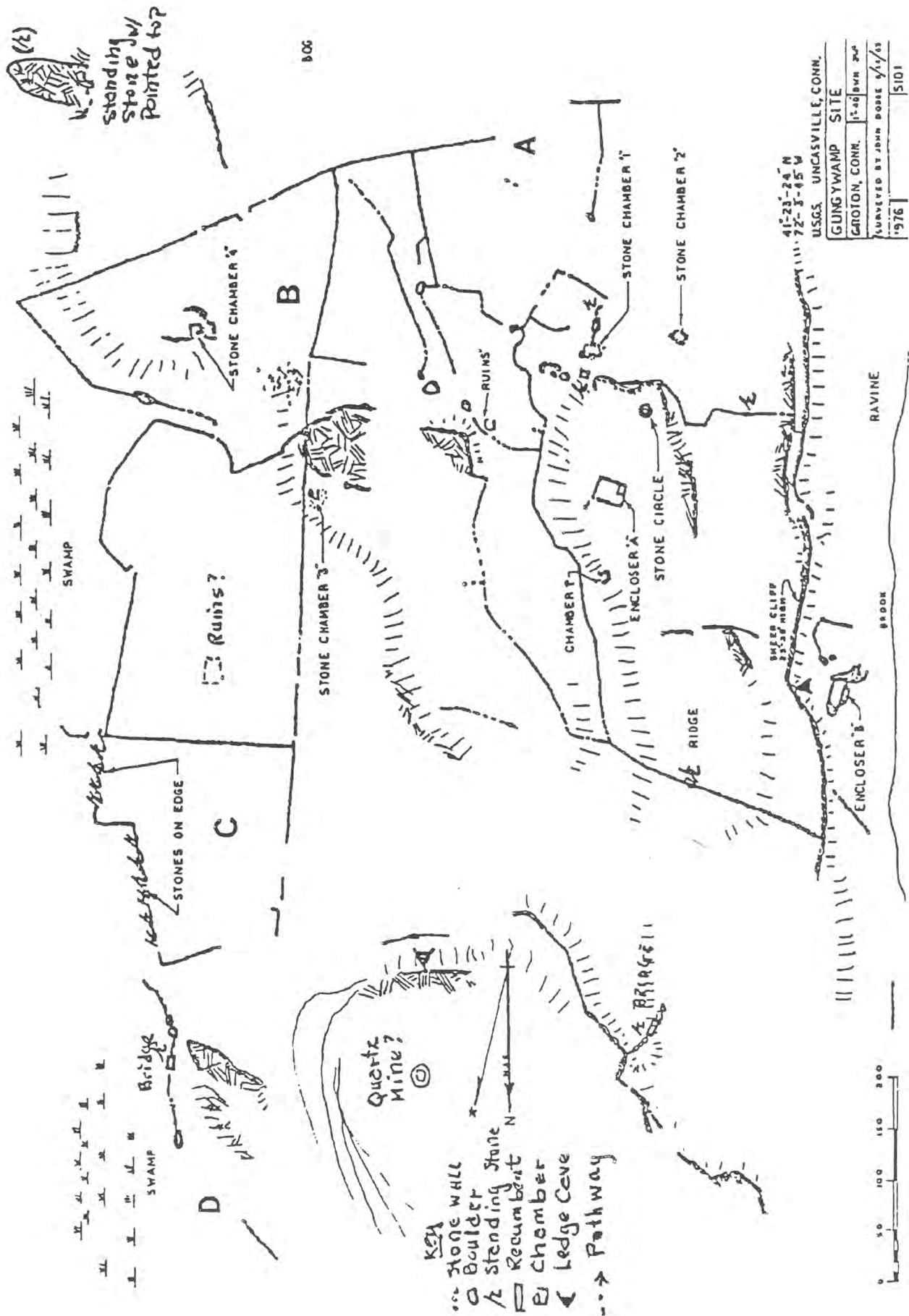
Entering the Gungywamp from the area of Latham's Pond, crossing a small earthen dam and following a path toward the northeast, there is a glacial ravine cluttered with boulders and rockfall from the cliffs which make up the westerly edge of the complex. The area to the south of the cliffs is wholly swamps and bogs which are crisscrossed by drainage ditches. Low stone walling meanders along the base of the sixty-five foot high cliffs. The central complex containing many of the archaeological sites is located on the plateau above.

The maps (pgs. 13 & 37) should be used in conjunction with the following site and area descriptions, but the use of a trained guide is almost always a necessity for first time visitors, or persons lacking woodland skills. By entering the area from the YMCA 'bar gate' and crossing the dam, it is possible to gain access to the Complex by taking a right turn at the juncture of two pathways. Beaver activity at the dam in 2016 has given this route an extra caution. By going left, instead, the trail leads northward up the West Ravine area into the North Gungywamp.

An excellent description of the geology of this ancient ravine was shared with us by Mr. Stan Gaby, professor of geology at Three Rivers College, Norwich, CT. He theorizes that during the last glacial retreat the mouth of the Thames River became blocked with millions of tons of ice, slush, and sediment, causing ice melt to expand behind and around the impediment. The ravine, he stated, was probably formed by this run off and the rock walls and ledges show positive signs of erosion and smoothing from rapid water passage.

Aerial photography of this area and the complex above displays numerous walls which, when seen from above, appear to be laid out in a most defensive manner. In one area there is a low stone wall which snakes along the very edge of the top of the cliff. Halfway down the sixty five foot incline is a second walling. At the bottom of the escarpment is yet a third low wall which meanders along the ravine, splitting here and there and eventually vanishing from sight.

At the 'Y' juncture of two trails stands a cluster of huge glacial erratic stones which form a megalithic "echo box." It has been observed that on a cold winter evening, when the ground is frozen and the trees are bare, a hunting whisper can be echoed from the fissure in the rocks and heard a quarter mile away on Gungywamp Road.



USGS, UNCASVILLE, CONN.	
GUNGYWAMP SITE	
GROTON, CONN.	15.26 N 20.4
SURVEYED BY JOHN DOBBS	5/1/55
	1976
	5101

Map A.

Site #1

Large Chamber

There are two known stone chambers which remain intact in the Complex in addition to the several ruins noted in this Guidebook. The larger of the two chambers is located just a dozen yards east of the smaller “Tomb Chamber” #2. It, like its counterpart, is a dry walled, semi-subterranean structure, built entirely of quarried stones and covered with an overburden of sifted, sterile glacial loess, turf and small stones. This remarkable chamber is large enough to hold seventeen people. Its major features include corbelled walling, a “light hole” built into the west end, and an auxiliary side chamber located behind the fabric of the north wall. At the entrance is a niche or “offertory” built at the top of the left wall. Below, is a door jam cut into the base rock.

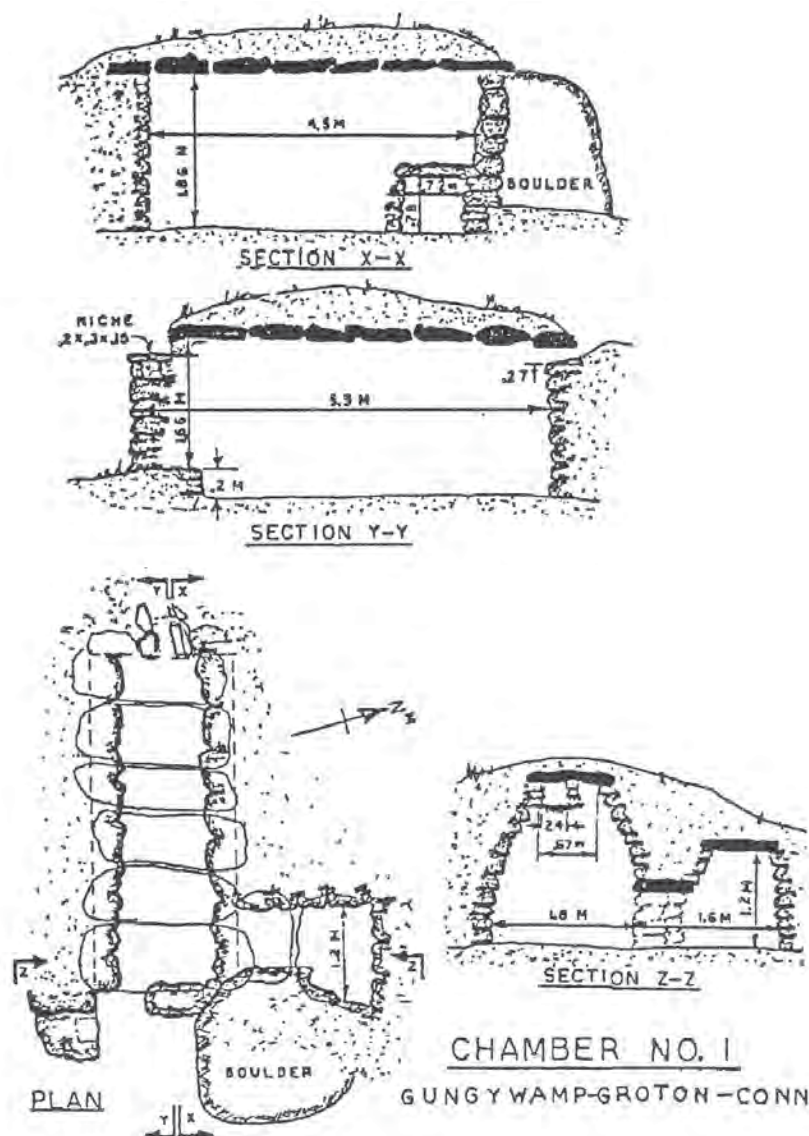
The chamber entrance is built against an anchor stone on the right hand side. This forms a support for the lintel and also forms a portion of the side chamber (or beehive chamber) behind it. The overhead roofing is composed of seven one-ton slabs of garnet-bearing stone. The architecture of this structure employs a “shed roof” effect which helps to carry away rainwater, as shown in the following illustrations.*

Excavations of this site have revealed nothing but modern trash and debris, being sterile and giving no clues as to when the structure was built, or by whom.

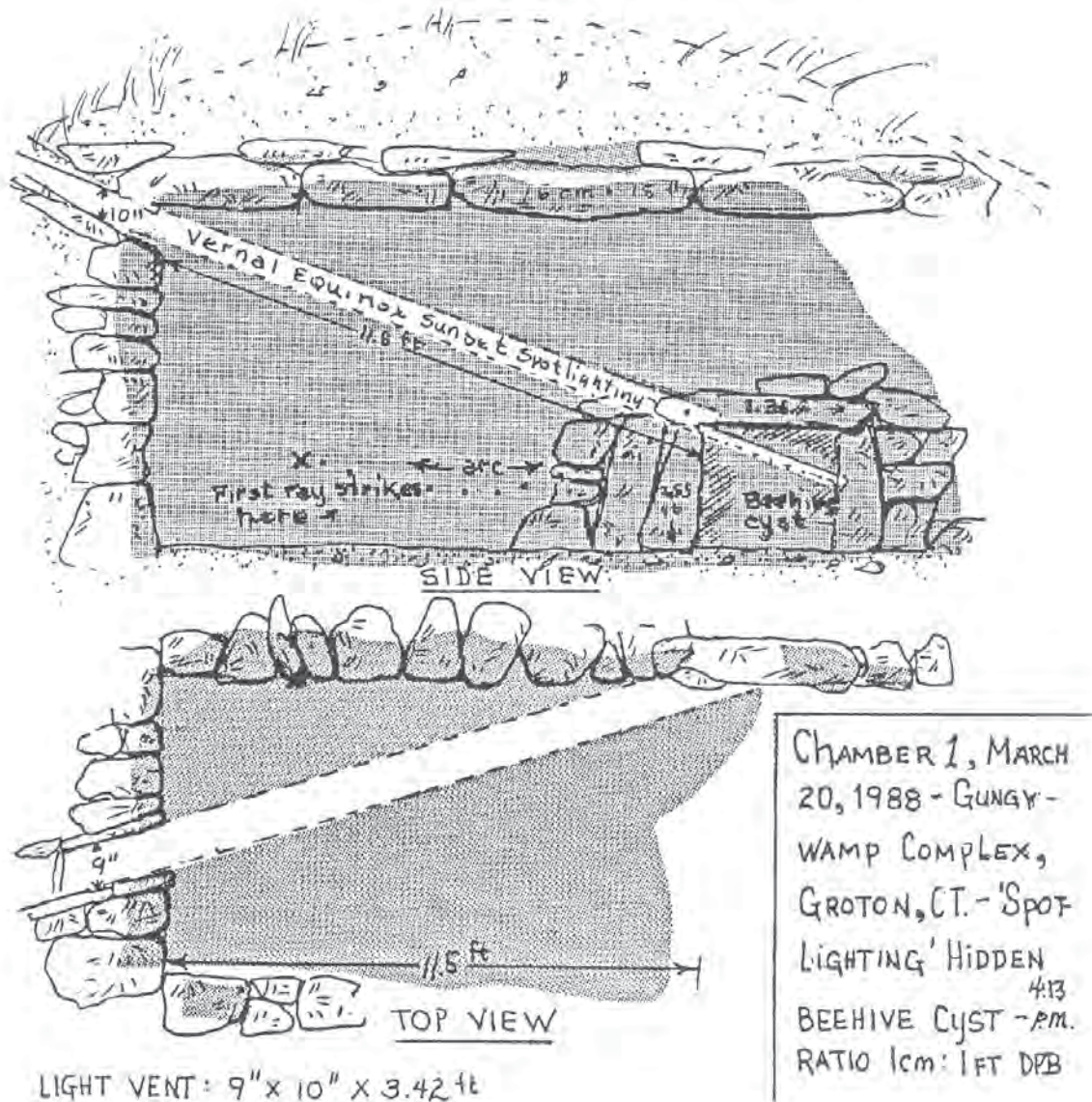


A most unique feature in this structure is its “light channel” or stone lined tube, which is designed precisely to permit the Equinoctial sunset to fully penetrate the chamber’s dark interior only two days during the year. The beam of sunlight, entering the 9” x 9” x 3’6” stone tube, illuminates the entrance of the hidden side chamber on the Equinox, March 22 and September 21. Both the upward angle and elevation of the “light channel” are precisely aligned to permit this ‘illuminare’ effect as seen in ancient stone chambers in Europe. The high density of garnet in the stones appears to magnify the intensity of the sunlight entering the chamber. These purposeful designs truly make the entire structure into a Calendar Site. Additional research is being carried out by Vance Tiede, Prof of Archaeology at Yale University to confirm other alignment potentials of sun rise, mid-winter effects and cross quarter day events.

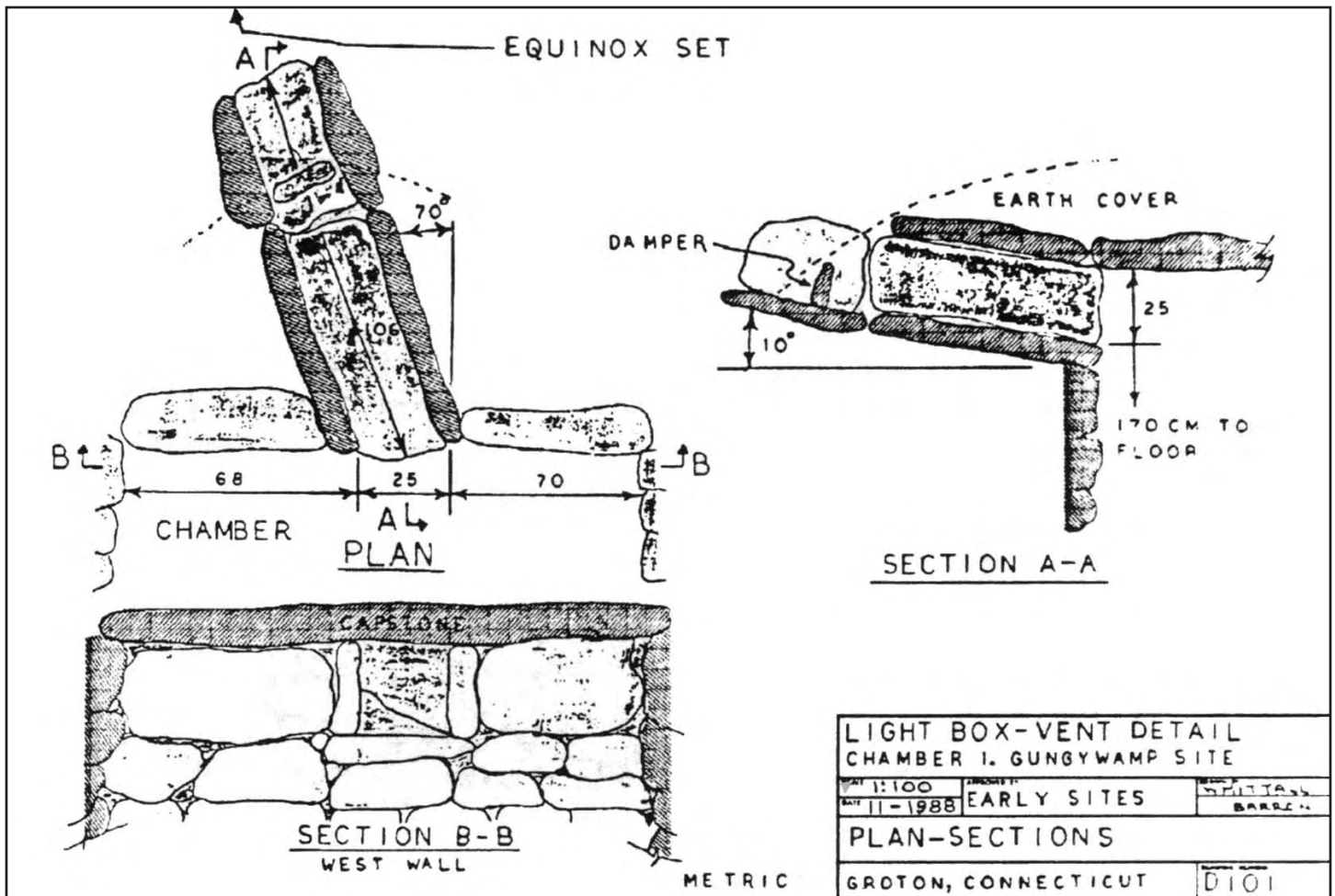
The once-sealed entrance to the side chamber, which is pinpointed by the sun’s rays, had been closed with layered rocks and debris until the mid-1960’s when the major chamber was excavated and the entrance to the hidden beehive chamber was discovered by William and Joan Nisbet of the Early Sites Research Society. The side chamber is unique, being built with a rare ‘beehive’ construction and situated totally underground. Measuring 5.25 by 3.93 feet (1.6 x 1.2 meters), it is only large enough to accommodate two or three people.



The major chamber itself was partially destroyed by vandals in April, 1984, when they removed several important supporting stones from the north wall near the entrance. Half of the north wall, three massive capstones, and tons of overburden soil fell into the chamber. The 1984 summer and fall activities of the Gungywamp Society field team was devoted to the reconstruction and restoration of the structure. Dr. David Stewart-Smith



of New Hampshire and his crew of experienced stone masons rebuilt the chamber, being guided with films and photographs supplied from the Gungywamp Society archives. During preparation work for the reconstruction, it was discovered that the original builders had used an ancient technique to seal the earthen mound against moisture and to retard the growth of trees. Our observations noted what appeared to be alternate layers of sterile, sifted soil laid over subsequent layers of small stones and grasses. This waterproofing technique is similar to what was found in the construction of Ireland's ancient "Bru" of Newgrange on the Boyne River. All phases of the reconstruction were documented, and stones were permanently numbered as evidence of reconstruction to future investigators. This restoration returned the structure to its original configuration with a high degree of authenticity.



A stone walling, including a large propped boulder, runs on a diagonal directly behind the chamber. There is a 'break' in the wall which may have been intentionally left to permit rays of the Equinoctal sunset to enter the chamber.

On the slope between the chamber and a large outcropping of ledge, just to the north, is a large three ton worked and squared rock (orthostat). It rests on a man-made palate of stones and rubble and appears to have been placed there for some enigmatic reason.

Directly east of the chamber's entrance, in a slight depression near a large outcropping of ledge, is a small triangular enclosure formed by the intersection of two rough stone walls. A fallen standing stone, now jammed into a crevice in a ledge, had apparently been erected long ago on a crude, small terrace just north of the triangular enclosure. Future restoration and research may confirm a suspected solar alignment of this fallen stone with the entrance to Chamber #1.



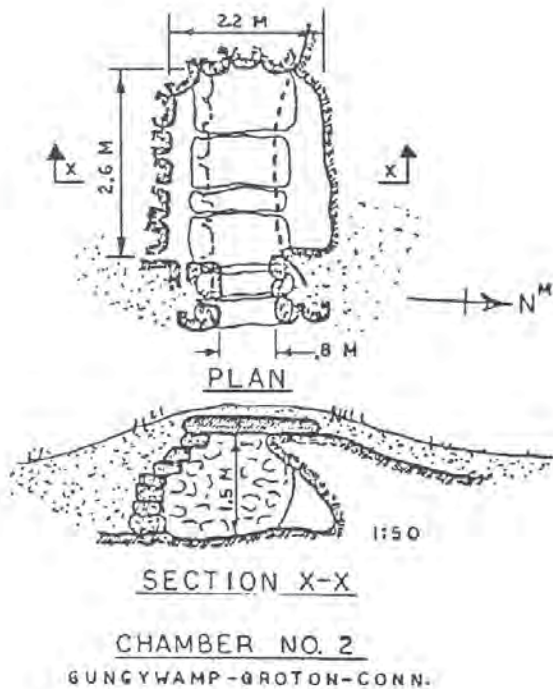
Site Marker #2

“The Tomb Chamber”

This is a small, semi-subterranean, dry-walled construction, dug into the hillside. It has four heavy roof caps, a broken lintel, and a closing doorway slab. The lintel and doorway slab were both removed from the chamber when it was first opened in the mid-1950's. These two slabs now lay in front of the chamber. One is broken into two parts. The other, a hand hewn slab of mica quartz, is designed to fit slots in the lower doorway of the chamber.

The chamber itself is built upon a rock ledge and has an anchor stone which forms its northerly wall. The interior is generally square in shape with some corbeling (arching) of the side walls. Several standing stones, dug into the earth and grooved into the ledge, support the entrance and facade of the structure.

Visitors for the past hundred years were apparently unaware of this chamber's existence. A coastal storm in the early 1950's washed away some of the covering dirt and the entrance was discovered by accident. The site has been excavated (interior and exterior) and has been found to be sterile. No artifacts have ever been discovered at this location to help date the time of its construction.



Old photo (John Dodge Collection) taken when chamber was first opened. Note granite capstone in place over entry, later removed and broken in half by vandals.

Reports from an eye witness to the opening of this chamber indicate that a small black pot had been found inside. It was, he stated, made of some heavy metal, had no handles, and was not rusted or badly corroded. It seemed to be “very ancient” in appearance. Because of its discovery in this sealed chamber and due to its blackened appearance without rust, one of the discoverers took it to a local college for examination in their anthropology department. Several weeks later, in returning for it, the man was told that they had no record of it. The pot had somehow been mislaid, vanishing from sight. One can only wonder if this metal pot, without rust, having lain so long in the dampness of the sealed chamber, might not have been made of bronze?

Another odd feature relates to the obviously intentional use of the gray white quartz slab as a “closing stone.” This heavy, 250-300 pound slab appears to have been quarried from a quartz vein nearly 3/10ths of a mile distant, brought to the site, dressed without use of metal tools, and placed at a 45 degree angle over the entry way of the chamber. All of the other capstones are of garnet bearing granite. Why this special stone was used so intentionally is a matter of conjecture ... and mystery. The use of white quartz as closing stones and as dressing over ancient burial cairns is well known in Ireland.



Site #5

Double Circle of Stones

The circles of stones are located on a ledge above, and a dozen yards north, of chamber #1. This construction is composed of two concentric circles of “worked” stone slabs (laid end-to-end) one circle resting within the bounds of the other. The inner circle, having a diameter of 8.85 feet, is comprised of nine stones. The outer circle of stones has thirteen slabs and measures 10.82 feet* in diameter and is backed by support stones and in-filled dirt. All of the stones have been carefully “worked” to create a continuous curve, either convex or concave, in the face bordering the runnel. Although the outer circle has fallen away from its original position, a reconstruction by photographic analysis clearly shows that the runnel, separating the circles, was about nine inches wide.

During an excavation of this site in the summer of 1987, it was discovered that a crude ‘flooring’ had been laid in the bottom of the runnel. At least ten inches of loam had built up in the trough over the years, covering this significant feature. No obvious signs of wear appeared on any of the stones making up the flooring or the sides of the runnel, but this negative finding was reversed later by geological inspection.

*(**Ed. Note** An important observation by Paul Chapman, Savannah, GA, notes that the 10.82’ diameter is just four times Thom’s Megalithic Yard of $2.72' \times 4 = 10.88'$). [1 MY = 2.72 ft]

No major artifacts were found during the excavation of the surrounding area bordering the circle of stones. No signs of metal wedges or drill marks were noted, indicating that the labor was done without benefit of metal tools. The probable method used in shaping the curves in each of the stones may have included the use of fire and water as well as hammering. The center of the circle of stones is filled to a depth of 14" with rubble and earth, laid on bare ledge beneath. The in-fill was partly disturbed during a previous excavation by a husband and wife team of archaeologists from Yale around 1960. No report of their excavation findings has been discovered. However, they must have also found that there had never been a central post hole to support an axle for a millstone.



Research on the site only partially supports a Tan Bark Mill theory. Unlike the majority of historic tanning mill structures located by swiftly running streams where leather tanning could utilize the cleansing and rinsing action of the water, this particular site is high atop the Gungywamp range, well away from all water sources. According to animal husbandry authorities, the very diminutive size of this structure precludes the use of domestic animals in pulling a grindstone around the irregular outer perimeter. Signs of soil compacting were found during excavation. There is a suggestion that, at one time, much more topsoil was present on the ledge than is evident today. The stratigraphic record shows two major horizons before encountering the ledge beneath. It was at the transition between these levels where charcoal was discovered in situ, in July, 1990. Carbon 14 testing at Geocron Laboratories, Cambridge, MA, reveals a date at a **Mean of AD 495** (1495 years old, +/-175 years before present, C 13 corrected) per sample GX-15986, as reported in E.S.R.S. BULLETIN released in 1991. Geological inspection of the interior of the runnel points to worn and polished quartz nodes within the fabric of the granite, indicating that the mill had been used in the distant past.

A fascinating suggestion for the site comes from an unlikely source. A noted NASA astronomer, using alignments from the center of the circle of stones to a nearby recumbent (fallen stone marker), strongly suggests that the westerly horizon and the circle of stones line up neatly to provide for a "Venus Calendar". He suggests that more research and confirmation of various declinations are needed to qualify the site for this unique distinction. Speculation and conjecture about the site's possible use for ritualistic purposes is beyond the scope of this guide. It is well known that such constructions were used for tanning, apple cider production, lime shell crushing, etc., back to AD700 and earlier. We offer the speculation that it most likely was a tan bark mill, perhaps powered by manual labor, and that the product was shipped elsewhere for tanning leather.

Site # 6

The “Enclosure A”

This rectangular “enclosure”, 100 feet north from the Circle of Stones was named by John Dodge first surveyor of the Gungywamp (1965) Our limited excavation in the summer of 1988 showed that the walls were built on bare sloping ledge and that topsoil has built up to a depth of 16 inches at its lowest southerly side over the years No artifacts of metal or stone were discovered during the examination of the soil

A small 6 x 4 foot room and its threshold was delineated in the southwest corner of the construction This suggests a habitation or shelter use for at least part of the site The rough “flooring” of this room made up of slabs and flat stones which leveled the area apparently maintained drainage and dry footing.

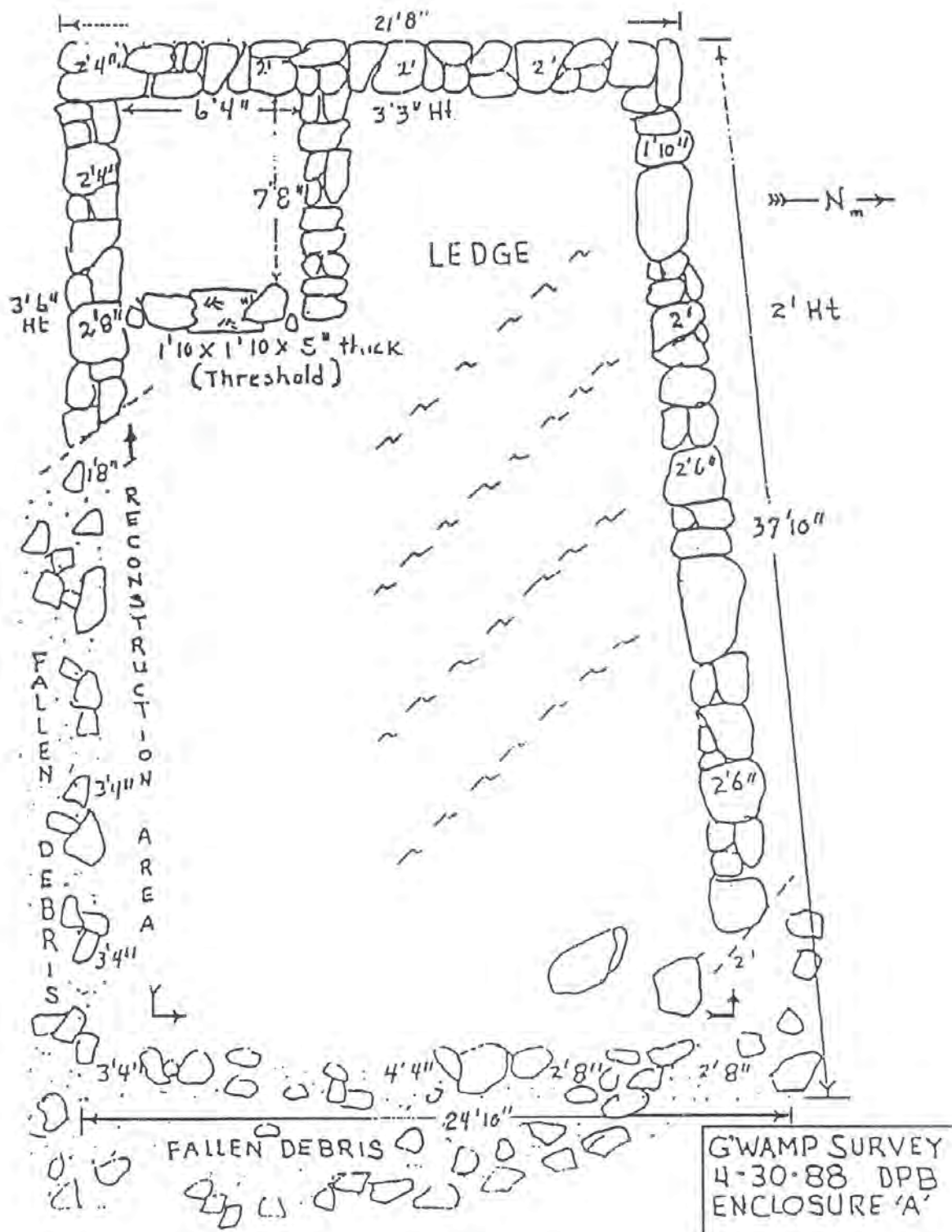
The strange architecture of this site is demonstrated by the degree of the sloping of the ledge on which it is built and the variations in height of the walls used to accommodate the slope itself Walling on the north is barely two feet high compared to five foot walling on the south.



This construction suggests less of an “enclosure” and more of a dwelling/habitation function for the site.

The selection of this rocky site is strange indeed, unless it was chosen for quick drainage. Those versed in animal husbandry have dismissed the idea that the site had ever been used as an animal pen, citing the irregular low walling, and sloping ledge on which the structure is built, and the absence of weed from animal droppings.

This “enclosure”, with its ruined walls and strange ante room, defies our present understanding, and is added to our growing list of enigmas of the Gungywamp.



Viewed from the East, the so-called 'Enclosure' is skewed from being a balanced rectangle. No apparent entryway has been found. The upper, SW corner houses a small, separate room, complete with an artificially levelled stone flooring. The major portion of the downhill, southerly portion of the wall has slipped from its base about 18 inches.

“Colonial Dwelling Ruins”

Consistent with our contention that the Gungywamp has had serial occupancy over the centuries, the ruins of this Colonial dwelling provide a closer, more easily understood picture of a post-Revolutionary War habitation.

Measuring approximately 25' x 25', these parameters suggest a modest, but comfortable home, complete with glass pane windows, a stone and clay fireplace and short chimney, together with more than one plastered room. No bricks were used in the construction of the chimney, but a beehive baking oven, made all of brick, was located in the shed portion of the dwelling to the right of the fireplace. The abundance and concentration of vast amounts of thick shell and lime plaster in the southwestern corner of the building suggests the presence of a “storage room.” It is likely that there had been a sleeping loft in the eaves, probably reached by a set of steps built alongside the fabric of the chimney.

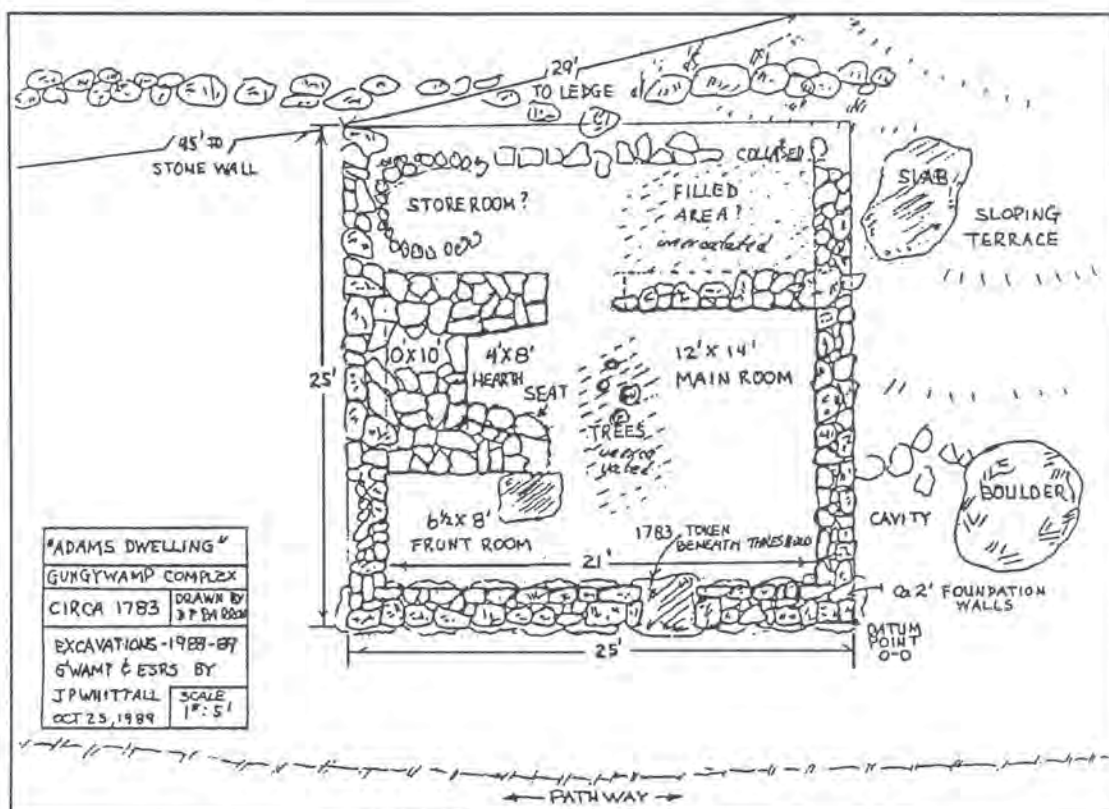
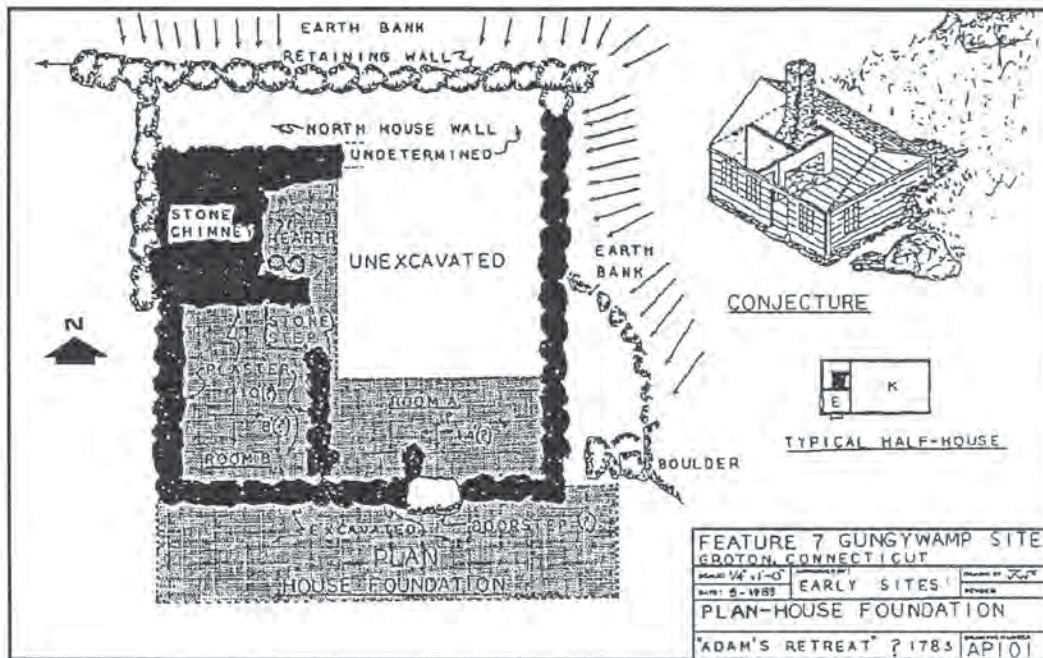
Artifacts found during the July-August 1989-1993 excavations included fragments of kitchen implements, knife handles, blades, crocks, dish ware, a tea pot, a kettle, and a folding jackknife. Bones and teeth of wild and domesticated animals were also present (particularly in the so-called “storage room” area). Numerous pewter and ivory buttons, clay pipe fragments, and personal items, attest to both male and female occupants. A rare token, marked **1783**, discovered beneath the inner lip of the stone threshold of the front door, gives a clue to when the structure may have been erected. A copper ‘ha’ penny, dated **1742**, was discovered near the fireplace hearth. Numismatic evaluation suggests that it was minted “in the Colonies” because of its use of unique lettering, e.g., in the word GEORGIUS, the rounded letter ‘U’ is used in place of the British mintner’s use of ‘V’. The sparseness and paucity of nails and spikes inventoried so far indicates that, either the dwelling had been dismantled and taken elsewhere, or, that it had been a log cabin which required few nails for construction. No charcoal, burned bone, or melted glass was unearthed, therefore a house fire, or slow rotting away, are unlikely scenarios regarding the fate of the dwelling. This isolated homesite, situated amongst rocky, boulder-strewn ledges, having no apparent nearby potable water source, and built on shallow, untillable soil, seems a poor choice for a profitable farm stead. There are no other foundations or out buildings. e.g. barn, stable, sheds, which one would expect to find in an early farm stead. It is interesting to note that no other dwellings were erected in the immediate vicinity since 1783.

Reported historical documentation is both vague and speculative concerning the possible owners of this site, circa 1783. Our excavation finds that the dwelling is much larger and more complex than the speculated size of a “one room house” (16' x 16') purportedly occupied by a spinster of the Adams family nearly a hundred years earlier. The Adams family were merchants and not farmers, per se. [An article written by George and Nancy Jackson appeared in Vol. 44 of the Connecticut Archaeological Society Bulletin, covering these aspects.]

An analysis of the hearth evidence suggests that Hanna lived in the house for only a few years, judging from the amount of ‘cupping’ and fire damage done to the hearth and back wall of the fireplace itself. Speculation has it that Hanna married late in life and moved away, taking her belongings, and most of the reusable mate-

rials from the house. Historic research is currently being undertaken regarding this potential. From the large sifting pile came diagnostic clues. A dozen variety of herbs sprouted, including Indian Poke and Cannabis. She was, apparently, an herbalist.

James P. Whittall, Chief Archaeologist for the Early Sites Research Society, provides a persuasive reconstruction of this dwelling as a common English “Half House” of the eighteenth Century, as shown in the following illustration:



SITE #3

“Hillside Chamber”

The ruins of this small, roofless stone chamber have slowly given up clues to its antiquity. Situated snugly on the easterly slope of the Complex behind a rambling stone wall, the structure is built against a large glacial ‘erratic’ which acts as an ‘anchor stone’. The entry way is tiny, located in the south portion of the chamber between the anchor stone and the beginnings of the structure’s walling. The boulder (anchor stone) forms the entire eastern portion of the enclosure. Some enlargement of the interior, at the base of the boulder, has been hammered out. The entire structure rests on base ledge. A convenient fissure in the sloping floor acts like a gutter, directing seepage downhill beneath the boulder. There is evidence that the boulder toppled 6 to 8 inches downhill, bring down the three large cap stones.

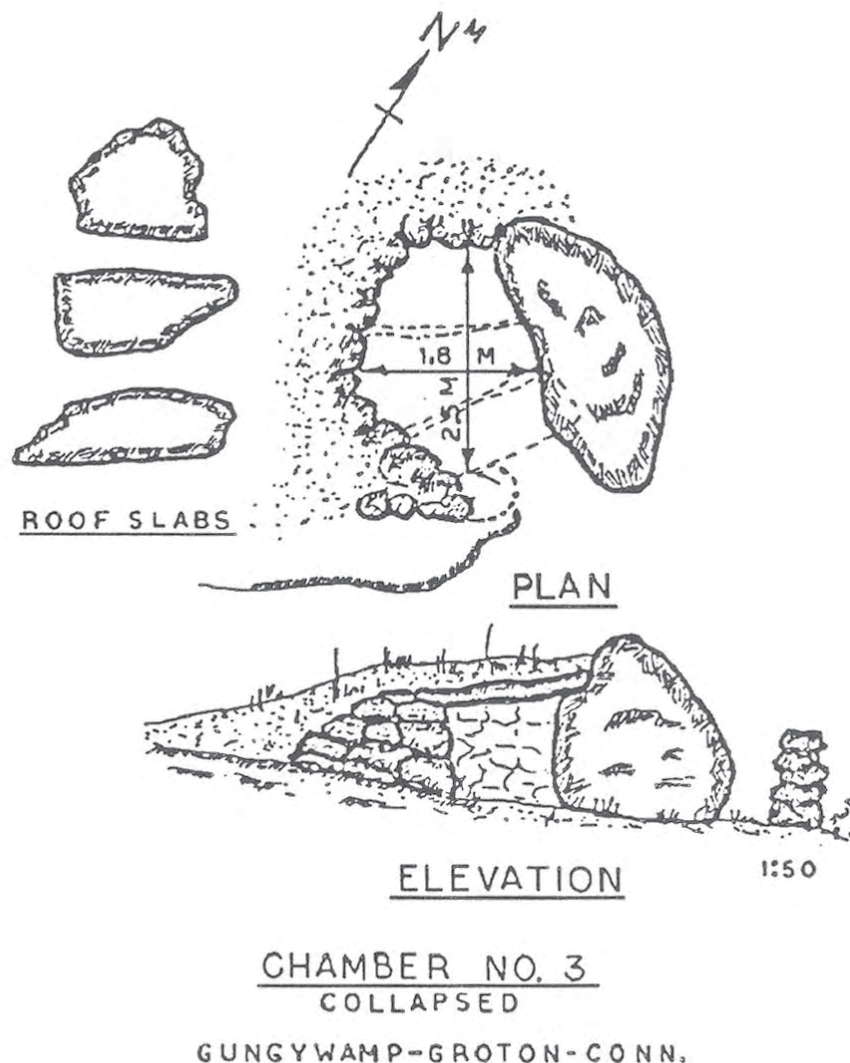


During the summer excavations of 1988 the gutter feature was discovered for the first time. In addition, it was also noted that the boulder had gradually moved away from the man-made northern walling, tilting downhill about six inches (7cm), leaving a diagnostic gap. It is impossible to know when this rolling occurred, whether in gradual stages over the centuries, or during an earthquake in early Colonial times, such as 1727 or 1791. It is more probable that the movement of the anchor stone played a crucial role in bringing about the collapse of the three capstones, allowing them to fall into the interior of the chamber.

The capstones which now lay on the ledge outside of the chamber, were originally removed during an Early Sites excavation (early 1970's) by James P. Whittall and the late William Nisbet. They found nearly a foot of accumulated loam on top of the collapsed capstones, attesting to the length of time between the original collapse and present day excavations. It is also problematic that some of the infiltration of dirt and debris had been from the overburden which once covered the semi-subterranean structure.

Consistent with findings in even the most ancient of stone structures in the British Isles, no important artifacts were discovered in the excavations of this chamber's interior or exterior surroundings.

It is interesting to note that this structure is most similar to the so-called "Watch Tower" chamber in Mystery Hill (a.k.a. America's Stonehenge), suggesting some contemporaneous origins over the past centuries of stone building in New England.





SITE #4

“Dump site Chamber”

Located on a hillock in the Eastern perimeter of the Complex, just a few yards from an old wagon track, this crude chamber was totally hidden from sight beneath tons of rubble and castoff rock slabs and rocks. Because he noted some apparent walling in the ruins, John Dodge, the first surveyor of the property, assumed that a chamber existed here and assigned it the title of “Chamber 4.”

During the summer excavations of 1987 (a cooperative effort of volunteers from the Early Sites Research Society and the Gungywamp Society) the site was carefully cleared of random slabs and obviously ‘dumped’ rocks covering it. The interior was filled with loam and roof slabs, and portions of the west wall. Few major artifacts were discovered as the excavation progressed down to the sloping ledge flooring. A constricted entry way was discerned at the northeastern corner of the structure. It was discovered that the ‘chamber’ had been built in a natural six foot wide fissure between two rock outcroppings, having a rectangular shape. No corbeling of the walls was noted.

An attempt to reconstruct the original features of the chamber as done on paper, was found to be speculative, at best, because of the ruinous and disturbed nature of the site. Many inches of loam had accumulated over the centuries and it can only be concluded that the structure collapsed long ago, perhaps during one of New England’s rare earthquakes, two of which occurred during historic times of 1727 and 1791. However, a portion of what was identified as a “Dutch Colonial Trade Pipe” was found within the accumulated loam covering the original roof slabs. This suggests that the structure had fallen long before Colonial times, judging from the artifact’s location in the stratigraphy, e.g., the structure had fallen, the over burden had collapsed with it, and loam, containing the pipe fragment, gradually accumulated on top of the ruins.



STANDING STONES of North Gungywamp

Sites #8 and #9

Rows of Standing Stones

On the westerly side of the main pathway (in the East Ravine area) in the northeastern sector of the Gungywamp Complex are two rows of standing stones marked with Site signs. Site #8 remains in better condition and has more intact standing stones than those in Site #9. For purposes of identification Site #8 is referred to as the South Row; Site #9 as the North Row. The South Row is oriented toward True North; whereas the North Row is oriented toward Magnetic North.

Research over the past ten years has found that both rows contain as many as twenty nine individual standing stones, stumps, or empty “sockets” where stone slabs had once stood. Each standing stone is set upright in its own “socket.” These “sockets” are simply cavities packed with small rocks, cobbles and debris intended to keep the slabs vertical. The depth of the sockets ranges between 12-18 inches.

The South Row has several missing stones at the southern-most end; presumably removed by vandals or rock hunters. There is a neatly “pecked” bird effigy inscribed in the north side of one of the larger stones, wings spread apart, head and beak facing east. Several of the slabs had been uprooted by vandals in the past, before sign posting was done. These stones have been replaced in their original positions, having their bases painted orange to signify restoration (as well as quick identification to future pot hunters that further digging would yield nothing but dirt!).

We know that the original builders used rock slabs from several distant ledges and outcroppings, since there is a variety of different types of rock present, as identified by visiting geologists. Short slabs start and end both rows, with the tallest slabs found in the middle of each row. Both rows are gently “bowed,” having an elliptical arch toward the east. The first surveyor of the area, John Dodge, erred when he drew both rows as being laid out in straight lines. At that time, however, they were nearly hidden from view beneath tangled walls of bull briar, undergrowth, tree falls and weeds. In 1980 Gungywamp field teams cleared the area for more accurate surveying.

The North Row is composed of many badly eroded, broken and leaning stone slabs. Many have been removed from their sockets and used in a more modern Colonial stone wall nearby. It is possible that the North Row was built before the South Row, judging from the greater wear and erosion.

Although rows of standing stones are found in Bronze Age sites throughout the British Isles the Irish Early Christian stone rows on the island of Skellig Michael, Co. Kerry, bear a much closer resemblance to the Gungywamp rows.

At least one professional archaeologist has dismissed these two rows of standing stones as being nothing more than an unusual Colonial stone wall, although their arrangement is unique in New England.

“Informational” excavations were carried out in 1993 to investigate the matrix of the pathway paralleling the stone rows. A medium sized sapling had been blown over by a hurricane and in the socket left by the roots we discovered uniform cobbling as well as a unique, polished “rubbing stone.” Several one meter squares were methodically excavated on the easterly side of the south row of standing stones. This disclosed that a single layer of cobbles had been laid directly on sandy, orange loess. Also, flattened stone ‘shingles’ were laid closer to the standing stones in a purposeful manner. In the deepest square, beneath the loess, one of the workers discovered a single, flat shingle which, when removed, revealed a vertical, round, clay lined post hole about 25cm deep. The purpose of this hidden hole is a mystery.



“Bird Effigy” carving discovered within the south row of standing stones
by Diane Porter Dix during a routine survey.



Site #10 Diagram of the Cursing Stones site.



Site #10

“Stone Bridge and Cursing Stones” “Cursing Stones”

Within fifty yards of the two rows of standing stones are several curious lithic features which stimulate much conjecture. There are two piles of stone cobbles neatly arranged on the tops of large, flat outcroppings. Both piles have the remains of larger stones framing the perimeter in a manner designed to keep the smaller rocks from tumbling to the earth. Many of the framing stones have been knocked, or pulled, from the ‘cairns.’ An examination of the cobbles shows that the top portions are deeply eroded, and pitted by the elements. The protected undersides, however, are smoothly polished. Obviously the amount of weathering by the elements suggests that these cobbles have been in place and undisturbed for many hundreds of years. Within the collection of water washed cobbles are quartz stones which appear to have been brought down from the top of the hill to the west.

Skeptics have cited such ‘cairns’ as being nothing but field clearings. One has only to quickly survey the surrounding terrain to see that, even with the present day woods removed, there are no fields within a hundred yards. Massive rock outcroppings cover the west and north; whereas ponds and bogs are found to the east and

south. Someone, for some obscure reason, built the stone frames and filled the interiors with water washed, smooth cobbles (probably taken from the bogs below) and placed quartz stones prominently in the center.

There are oral traditions among native American tribes for the building of such stone piles in honor of fallen members during wars; as well as tally piles for those who went into battle, leaving a stone behind to be removed when the warrior returned. The European counterpart exists today in the form of altars of cursing stones. On the Island of Inishmurray, off the northern coast of Ireland, a reminder of Pagan ritual is seen in the shell and limestone altar found just outside of a small chapel. Tradition, as reported to the author on a visit to Ireland, had it that, should a man have a grievance against his neighbor, the local priest would tell the man to fetch a smooth stone from the beach on the mainland and return with it. The priest would bless the stone and place it in the altar as a curse against the offender. There are other examples of such piles of stones, located near churches, which are still used today for curing both human and animal ailments.



“Stone Bridge”

Just a few paces north of the cursing stones is a small, possibly ritualistic, stone bridge spanning the gap between two rock outcroppings. A large, free standing and slightly pointed standing stone crowns the site. Here, then, is a recumbent and an upright stone, similar to those seen on the moors near Cornwall, England. Burl has numerous photographs of such architectural oddities in his books. North American examples are seen at

Mystery Hill (a.k.a. “America’s Stonehenge”) in North Salem, NH, and at Cockaponsett State Park in Guilford, CT. There are two more stone-bridge-standing-stone combinations to be found in the Greater Gungywamp. These, unfortunately, are located in remote areas with difficult access.

“Quartz Mine”

At the top of the hill, ascended by climbing the huge rock outcropping to the west above the stone bridge, is a lengthy vein of mica-quartz which has been quarried in the past. A short segment of stone walling, located on a nearby ledge, is made up entirely of this quartz. The vein, apparently quarried long ago, judging from the amount of erosion in the softer granite, had also given up a slab large enough to be hauled 3/10ths of a mile into the complex itself to serve as a closing stone on the small “Tomb Chamber” (Site #2).

It is interesting to note that nowhere in the Gungywamp are there drill holes made with iron tools. Apparently all of the quarry work done for stone chambers, foundations, rock walls and other structures, was performed without the benefit of iron tools, wedges, hammers or drills!

NORTH PATHWAY

Staircase Stone Wall

One of the most unusual stone walls to be found in New England is located in the northeastern section of the Gungywamp Complex. The walling, running uphill in an east by west direction, separates the properties owned by the YMCA from those owned by a private family.

The unique design of the wall is not readily apparent because of its ruinous condition. Some portions have been knocked down by tree falls. However, upon closer inspection, the discerning eye can identify the deliberate rise and fall of the “treads” and “risers” which create the staircase effect the builders used in its construction.

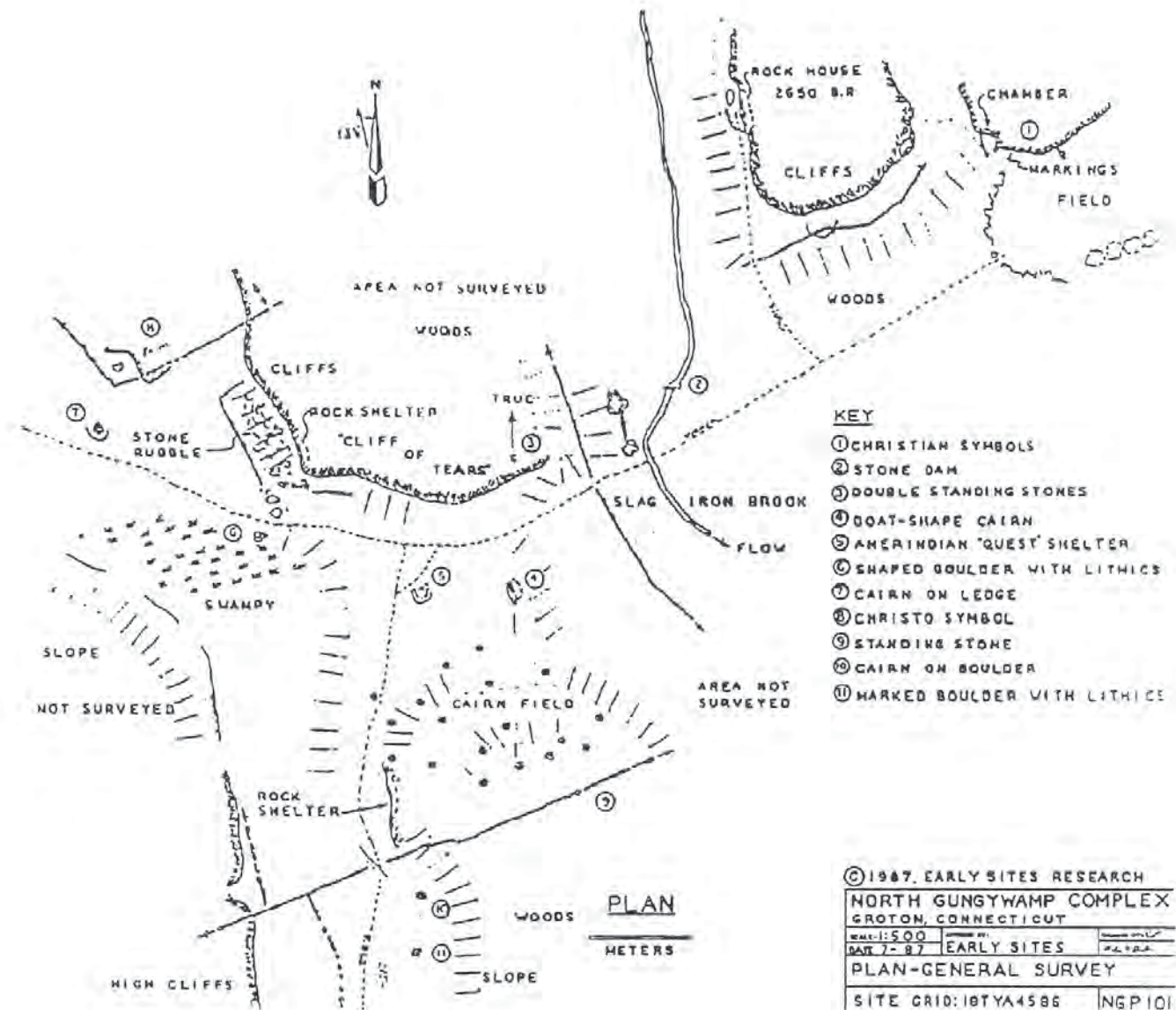
The wall was constructed of stones quarried from a large exposed granite ledge on the lower portion of the easterly hillside. It is several hundred feet long, vanishing from view over the top of the hill, ending abruptly just beyond the peak. At the lowest, easterly end, the wall seems to disappear into the bog. However, probing the roots and muck of the bog suggests that the structure continues under the swampy surface for some distance. Remnants of this construction reappear, some 1000 feet to the east, on the far side of the bog. Perhaps some future excavation will confirm these observations. How long this walling has been covered over by the pines and bog is a matter of conjecture.

Careful examination of the fabric of the stones and the walling itself finds no evidence of Colonial drill marks or the use of metal wedges and gags employed for quarrying in historic times. Apparently the slabs and dressed rocks were wrestled from the outcropping with nothing more than brawn, hammers and wooden wedges.

A similar “Staircase Wall” can be found on the Welsh border in the British Isles. It, too, is built on a steeply angled hillside. In a Scottish “Dun” (fort) construction one can also note this form of architecture.



MAP (B) - North Gungywamp Area



This Plan, done by James P. Whittall in 1987, does not show the 'Dug Out' site (upper right), nor the recently discovered Chi Rho symbols (far left). This is all located on private property, thus extending the scope of the main complex much further north than originally surveyed by John Dodge, Civil Engineer, Stonington, CT.

THE NORTH GUNGYWAMP COMPLEX

— A Note of Caution —

The entire complex of lithic sites, trails and ruins found north of the Staircase Stone Wall is located on private property and is not generally open to the public. Trails leading into this area are not sign posted. Permission to enter (or the use of a sponsored guide) is required.

Users of this Guide are urgently requested to respect the property owner's right to privacy and to avoid trespassing.

The following explanations and descriptions are permitted with the approval of the owners. However, material continued within this section of the GUIDE should not be misconstrued as permission for free and open access to this beautiful area.

**STOP. DO NOT ENTER THE NORTHERN SECTION
OF THE MAJOR COMPLEX
WITHOUT PERMISSION**

WAYSIDE RUINS

Dugout Site

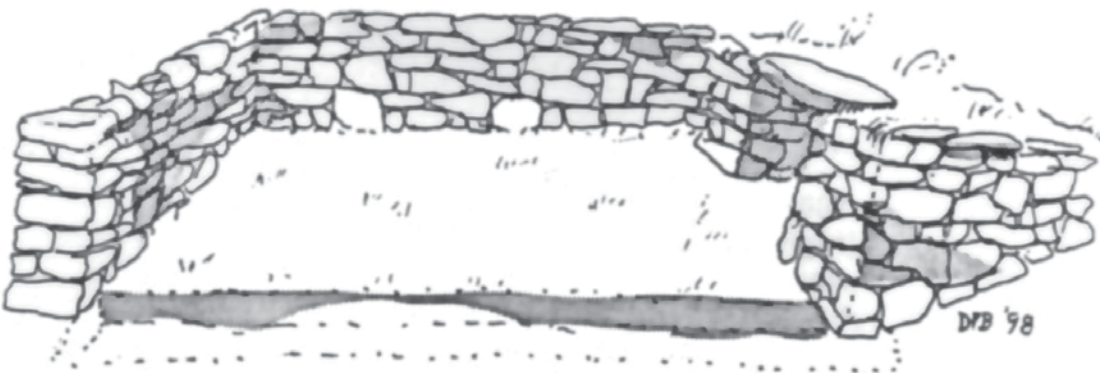
This three-sided ruin was discovered by one of our members, Alton Lewis, and had not gained our attention over the years because of its ruinous state, being filled with stone debris, Mountain Laurel, and second growth trees. James P. Whittall, archaeologist, Early Sites Research Society and David Barron initially cleared the area for better surveying. During the next two seasons Gungywamp Field Crews completed as exact a recreation of the three walls and fireplace as could be done. Three medium sized trees were removed as stone mason Paulette Buchanan deftly reconstructed the walls.

The small fireplace had lost its mantel which had fallen onto portions of the north wall that had preceded it. On examination, the mantel was found to have a carefully carved and curved arch to it. With pry bars, rollers and planks two men and three women managed to move the heavy slab up an incline ramp and back into place on the newly restored north wall. The original placement of a chimney flue was obliterated. Empiric observations did suggest that the original chimney was not made of stone, but rather clay and branches. There was no evidence of stones or rock fall from a chimney and this feature was left unfinished.

In mid-summer, 1996, the site was clear enough to instigate a limited excavation. Several meter squares were dug, north to south, in the open area between the opposing walls. No artifacts were discovered beyond a dozen or so hand wrought nails. Observation noted that the rear floor area (west) had a crude stone flooring. This area had been totally covered by rock fall from the west wall. It is likely that the east and exposed flooring had been robbed of its stone slab flooring at some time in the distant past.

Yes, charcoal was found in the fireplace, but also in the uphill corners of the walls. Apparently hikers or campers had built fires in these protected recesses before the walls fell. Because of the prohibitive cost of radio carbon dating, it was decided that no useful information could be expected from any of these three areas. Soil samples were taken and stored for future investigation.

Although Town records fail to show this ruin on land maps, and the present owners of the land knew nothing about the site, members of the field team opined that the structure was most likely of British Colonial origins. Hopefully some specialist in identifying nail types will be able to shed some light on the age of these rusted artifacts. Without other identifying objects, the age of the ruins will have to await further investigation.



Artist's rendition, not to scale, illustrating the rough, three-sided structure, with the reconstructed fireplace (right), walling against a 20 degree slope and the six meter excavation trench (foreground). Stonework rebuilt above ruins is delineated by aluminum spray painted X's on the underside of each stone.

VOGT CHAMBER ONE

“The Ruins”

Located in the south meadow of the Vogt family property, at the base of a large rock outcropping, are the excavated ruins of a stone chamber. Before excavation in the early 1980's the site appeared to be nothing more than a large pile of castoff rocks and stones in an “L” shaped indentation formed by a rock ledge and a stone-walling which meandered above it.

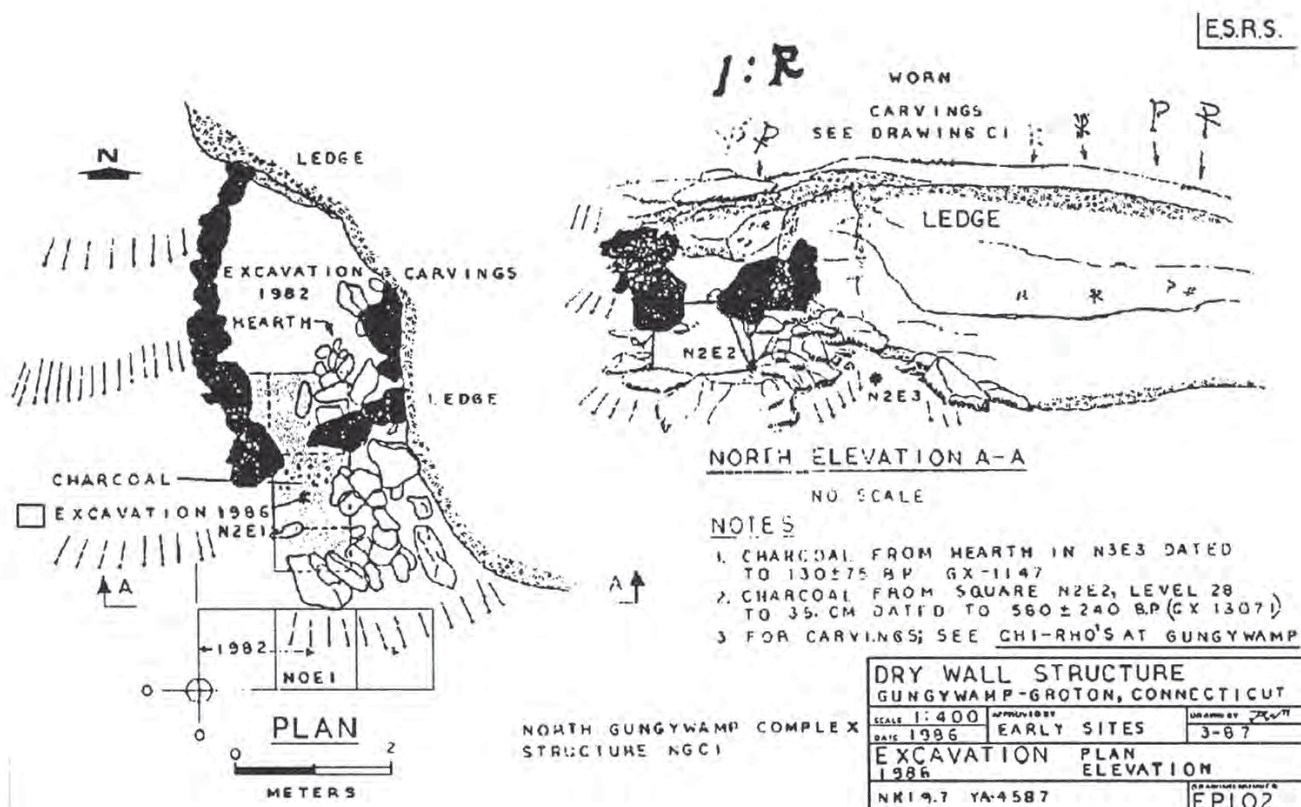
After the careful removal of many tons of loose rock and debris, a dry wall foundation was discovered, forming a rough, round feature which appears to have been the remains of a stone roofed structure not unlike those found in the Gungywamp Complex to the south. The cavity was filled with many inches of loam which had accumulated since the structure collapsed upon itself. The bedrock flooring, sloping downhill, had been hammered flat to provide for a level sitting place. Some extensive ‘firing’ of the stone outcropping was evident above the debris, suggesting that the ruins had once been used as a dump for the burning of unwanted brush and trash. The excavation performed within the structure and throughout the area in front discovered no datable artifacts beyond some possible hammer stones and rough stone implements (?).

Two different carbon dates performed by the Geocron Lab in Massachusetts attest to the age of the structure. A sample of carbon was taken from a crude hearth discovered just inside the entryway on the right hand side. This gave a date of @1745 AD +/-, suggesting that the structure was standing during Colonial times and had been used on at least a few occasions for warmth and shelter. This hearth was built on infiltrated dirt and loam which had accumulated long after the structure had been built. None of the other stone chambers in the area have given up carbon of this date, nor have they shown signs of early Colonial occupation. A second carbon date, secured by the Early Sites Research excavation which continued exploration around the base, entryway and front apron, arrived at a date in the early twelfth Century, e.g. as early as 1130 AD. This sample was taken from the soil at the entryway which had been bare at the time the structure was built. Both samples attest to serial occupancy over a period of several hundred years, but neither can give definitive information on when the structure was originally constructed, or by whom.

During the course of the original excavation, a casual examination of the rough granite ledge (which makes up the north and easterly sides of the chamber) disclosed some crudely inscribed symbols, badly weathered and eroded, beneath a heavy patina of moss and lichen. These symbols, having the appearance of a lower-case “r”, an upper-case “R” and a “P . . . having its lower leg crossed with an X”... were photographed repeatedly. Because of the extensive erosion photographic techniques included stereoscopic imaging, side lighting, enhancement with washable aluminum powder, impressions taken with aluminum foil, and castings made with latex peels. The latter, done as a last resort, removed much of the lichen unfortunately, but recent information indicates that lichen and its organic components tends to eat away at inscriptions and that this removal might have been fortuitous.

Further investigation of the ledge face discovered several more of the "P" and "P-slash" symbols. These were later identified by a Wisconsin University geologist as being early Christian CHI RHO symbols. In 312 A.D., these Greek letters were displayed on shields used by the soldiers of Constantine's army. An in-depth research on the development of the CHI RHO was done by James P. Whittall and David P. Barron while in Ireland in 1986. They noted the obvious antiquity of the style used in the Gungywamp symbols, suggesting a probable dating around 500 to 700 A.D., which is the transitional era to which these forms relate. The CHI RHO, standing for the first two consonant sounds in the name of CHRIST, had many later variations. They ranged from the crude, simple forms found in the Gungywamp to styles which were quite ornate, flowery, and encased in box-like configurations. A complete report on this site and the CHI RHO symbols can be found in the EARLY SITES RESEARCH SOCIETY 'BULLETIN', Volume 13, Number 1, December, 1986, pgs 10-16.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Barry Fell, President of the Epigraphic Society, predicted the discovery of these CHI RHO's while on a visit to the North Gungywamp in 1979. He had arrived to evaluate a crude "Christogram" discovered by David P. Barron and Carl Vogt I. At that time he noted that where one finds a "Christogram", one is also likely to find CHI RHO's. It was three years later that these symbols were accidentally discovered by Lynn Mason, a member of the field team conducting an excavation at the site. This remarkable discovery certainly gave Dr. Fell's suggestion total credence.



VOGT LEDGE SHELTER II

“Hidden Valley Site”

Discovered in 1979 by David P. Barron, this classic ‘ledge shelter’ provided Early Man with a natural protection from the elements, giving security on three sides. It was in an ideal location, having access to water, nuts, small game, and warming rays of the afternoon winter sun.

Excavations have been carried out nearly every year since 1980, gradually researching every centimeter of in-filled dirt and debris left within the ledge shelter, or dropped on its front apron. Research teams have been challenged by a complex set of stratigraphic levels. The sloping, banked up earth, meeting the eroded, compacted soil of the apron was generously mixed with rock falls from the ledges above. Excavations have reached downward 95 centimeters before striking bedrock.

Artifacts discovered at this intriguing site have ranged in age from present day Coke bottles and Navy blankets to 4,000 +/- year old material. Late Woodland type of Iroquois pottery (**1200 - 1600 AD**) and cedar stakes were found at the 25cm level within the eroded ‘apron’ soil. Early Woodland projectile points and kiln-dried, grass-tempered pottery, bones, and lithic tools were unearthed just within the shelter itself. Archaic Times are represented by crude, dentate pottery tempered with sandy pebbles, projectile points, hammer stones and fired hearth stones. At the 35 to 50 cm. level laboratory samples of charcoal match the known age of several unique projectile points (Susquehanna Points circa 1500 to 500 BC), giving radio carbon dates as early as 770 BC. At the base rock level, only the crudest of flakes, scrapers, and fire exploded hearth stones were found. No charcoal or fragments of wood/organic residues were discovered to help date this lowest level. The total absence of charcoal suggests that the fires burned in these several hearths were extremely hot and that they burned totally to ash. This lowest level may range back in time to a period of 1500 to 2000 BC, and even earlier, as suggested by Connecticut State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni.

Excavations carried out in late 1993 revealed extensive deposits of charcoal, iron slag, and fire-hardened clay-grit features. Because of the suspicion that some ancient iron smelting had been undertaken in the area, more extensive surveying and excavation of the area is warranted in the near future.

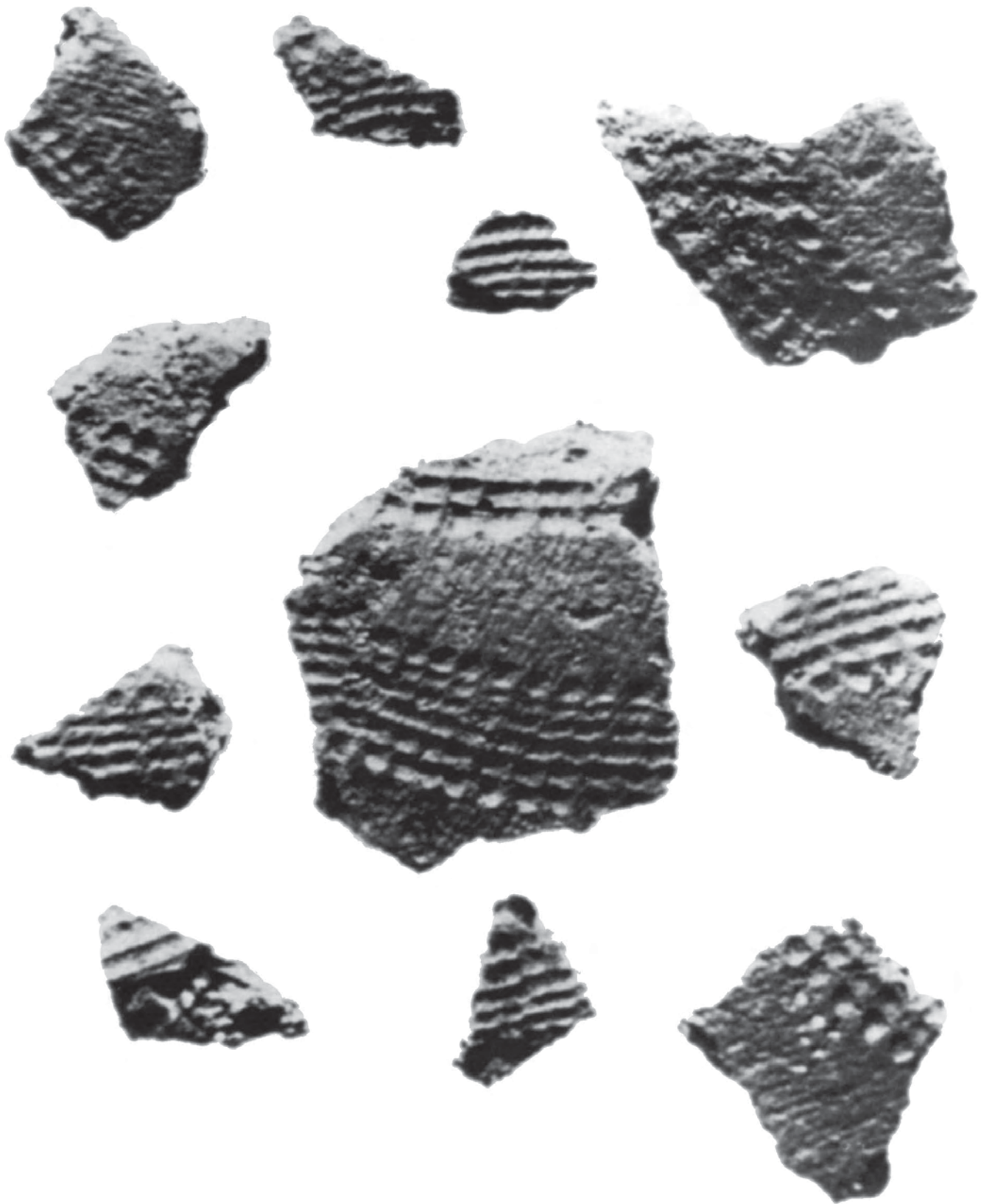
At present the site remains open for continued excavation and research. Although some in-filling has been done, the property owners prefer to have the area left open for viewing. Artifacts are in the process of being recorded and cataloged, and are on display at the Dodge Memorial Library in the Gungywamp Society headquarters..

As noted in the Gungywamp Complex to the south, serial occupancy of this site is not a matter of conjecture. It is firmly established that the site has been discovered time after time over the millennia. Artifacts have been left behind and subtle hints have remained to tell us more about the development of tools, weapons, pottery and utensils, cooking methods, rock working, building in stone, astronomic interests, and possible merging and contacts with early seafaring visitors.

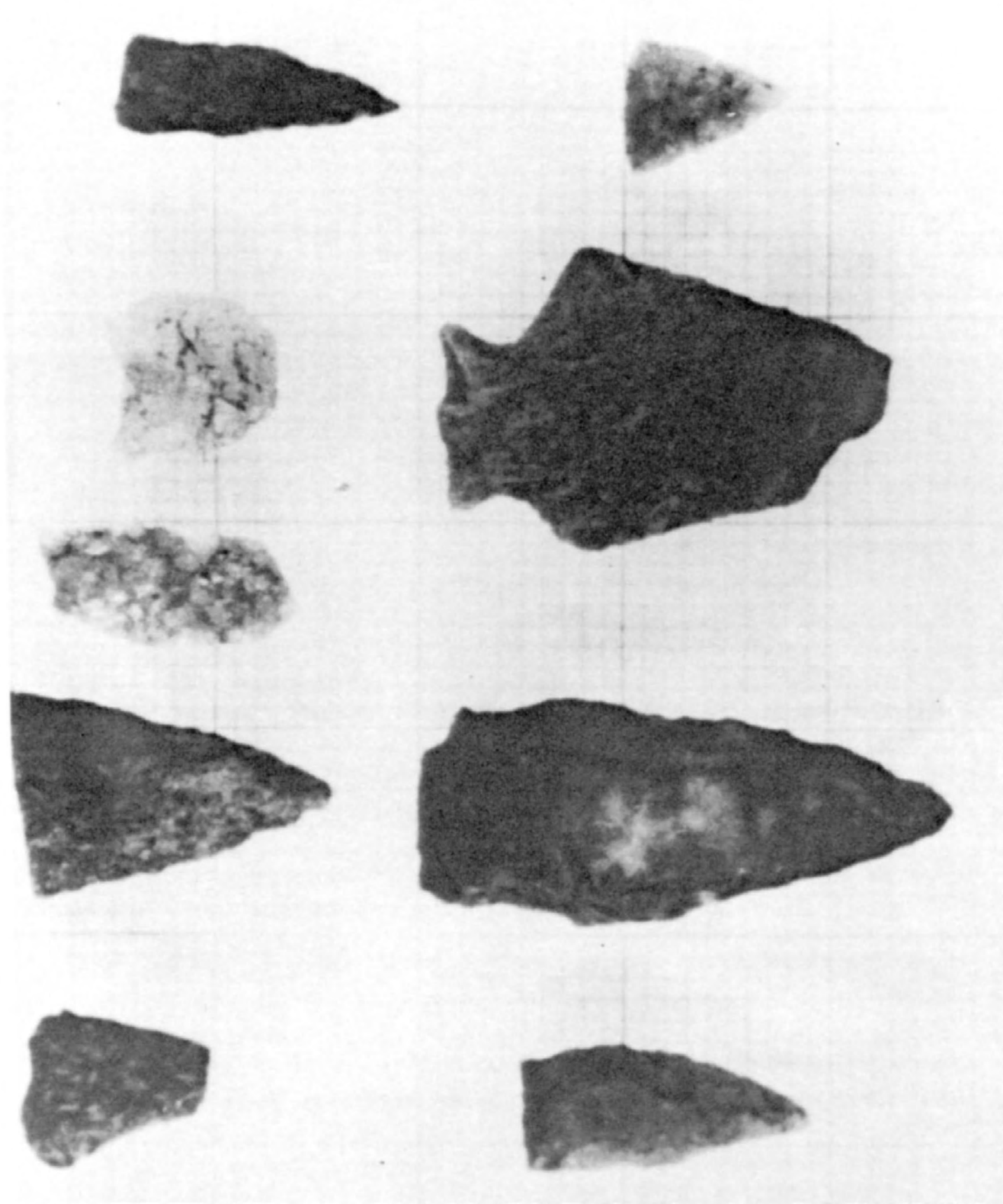
A careful examination of the ledge shelter itself will show how the first occupants used the natural features of the site: taking advantage of the large fissure in the corner to draw smoke up and away, dispersing it high above, and finding the natural cooling drafts falling downward from yet another fissure; refreshing 50 degree temperatures in the summer; warming 50 degrees in the winter. What more could Early Adaptive Man desire for himself and his family?



Indian Ledge Shelter. Photo by Steve Hart (Fall 2004)



“Dentate” pottery, crudely fired and tempered with grit, found at 770 BC level, buff to orange color.
At least four other varieties of pottery fragments were found at the Ledge shelter II site.



Sample collection of projectile points ranging from Late Woodland to Archaic (500 - 1500 BC).



Unusual "Profile" hammerstone bearing percussion marks on ends and side; found at the 770 BC level with pottery and charcoal.

CAIRN FIELD & INDIAN LODGE HOUSE

“Cliff of Tears Site”

This remarkable site, located just west of Slag Iron Creek, contains nineteen low, unpretentious stone cairns. These stone piles were excavated by a joint effort of Early Sites and Gungywamp field teams in the summer of 1987. They were known to exist for many years, but the extent of their numbers and locations were only discovered after extensive clearing and surveying. The cairns are found on the northern hillside at the end of a series of elevations which make up the Gungywamp Range.

The cairns were built in odd shapes and sizes: circles, tear drops, ovals, squares, and rectangles. Each cairn appears to have its own “identity” in terms of the kind of rock, cobble, slab or quarried material used. It is obvious that these were not simply Colonial field clearing piles. Excavations of several cairns found nothing of significance, such as bone material, cremational remains, tools, or grave goods. The most unique of these cairns is the ‘Boat-shaped Cairn’ situated near the walking path. It is located on a flattened portion of the hillside and partially built upon an outcropping of rock ledge. Unlike the other cairns, this one has three standing stones set up at the ‘bow’, ‘amidships’, and ‘aft’, much like a three-masted sailing ship. The center standing stone could possibly represent a Manitou, or God stone, used by Native Americans. There are several smooth, water-washed quartz cobbles laid along the central axis. The purpose for this design, for the ornaments, and for the use of quartz, is unknown at this time. It was sadly vandalized in April, 1991 and later meticulously restored by society work teams during the following summer. Good photographs and surveys assisted in an authentic restoration.

Research into the surrounding topography finds that the ‘Boat-shaped Cairn’ is neatly aligned with another cairn directly up hill from it, and these two are in perfect association with a pair of standing stones placed on



the ledges several hundred feet to the north. All three features are on a North-South (true) alignment.

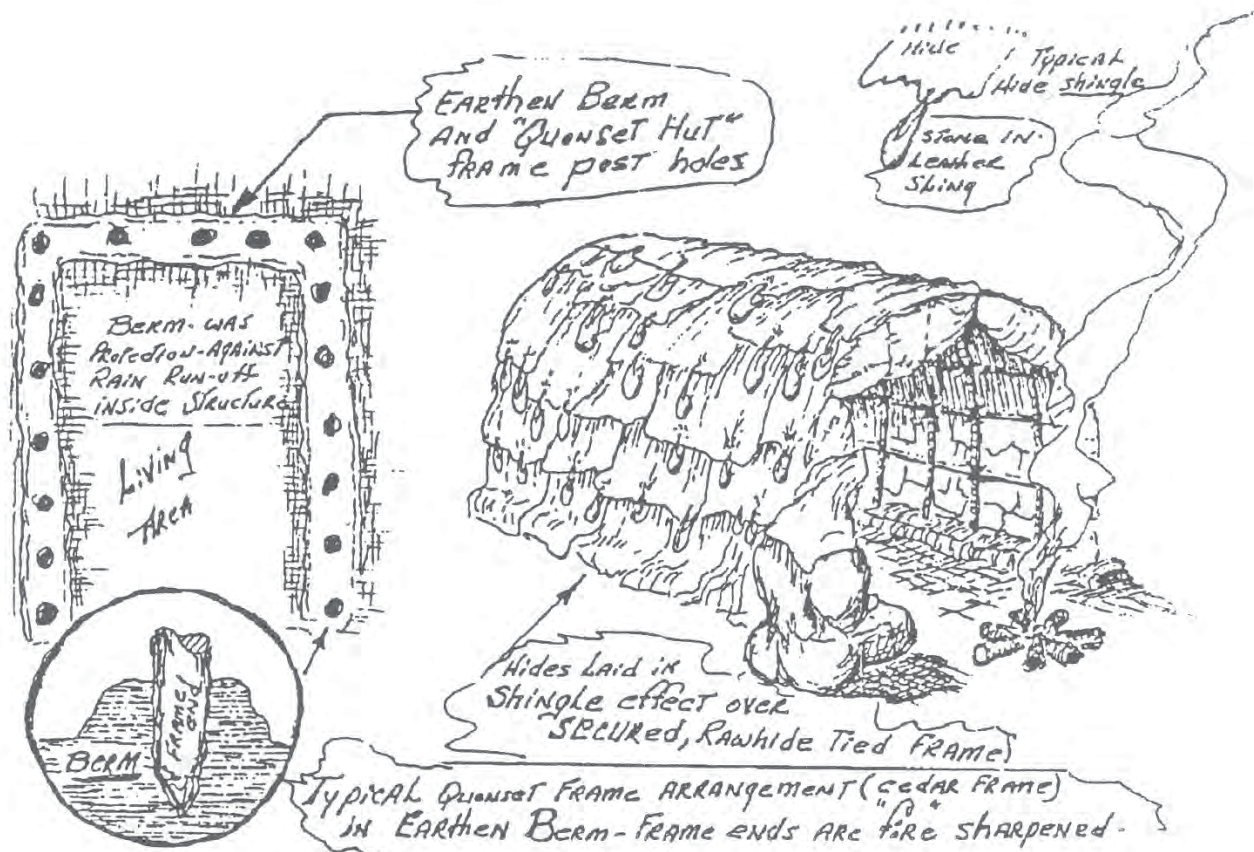
Boat shaped stone cairn with three standing stones, oriented north by south and aligned with other cairns. Excavated to ledge 1988 and reconstructed. Contains quartz cobbles and numerous offerings.

“Lodge House”

During the 1987 survey, it was noticed that many of the cairns had young trees (35-50 year old maples and oaks) growing out of them. At the juncture of two of the walking paths James P. Whittall discovered a slight rising of the earth at the base of several large trees. The shadows of the rising sun revealed a small, rectangular, and somewhat eroded 18” embankment enclosing the area. Excavation of this site revealed a U-shaped earthen mounding which contained two hearths, many ironwood stakes, evidence of previous conflagrations, and many odd cast-off items.

A Woodland quartz projectile point was unearthed in the southeastern corner of the dig. A Shoreline rail-road (trolley) token, dated 1916, was found near the front entry. Other modern artifacts were also revealed, suggesting that this Amerindian lodge house had been utilized, in all probability, for a time-span of several hundred years. It may be possible that the structure(s) burned to the ground at least twice, judging from the replacement of many of the wooden stakes used in its construction. Charcoal and ironwood stubs left in place, and the range of datable material left behind at the site attest to its occupancy and probable origins.

The location of the “Lodge House” and classic artifacts found within it, seen in direct proximity to the stone cairns, strongly implies that the immediate area had been utilized by Native Americans over a several-hundred-year duration. It remains conjectural whether the site was used for ritual, spiritual, or memorial purposes in the absence of other hard data. Only the architecture, the remains of the building, and a few lithic artifacts are present on which to judge its use.



It is well-known that, even today, a few American Indians do make annual visits to this general area, following footpaths through the woods from the northeast and Lantern Hill. Again, what their visits are for, and what special significance the area holds for them is, as yet, unknown.

Investigation of trail markers in the vicinity confirms the suspicion that routes to this site have been purposefully laid out for walkers. One such marker was accidentally discovered by Alton Lewis as he wandered just to the south of the hillside. He uncovered a set of four flat stones laying on a rock outcropping and discovered an arrow-like, bas-relief carving which had its narrowest point aimed toward the meeting house location.

A similar, but more ornate trail marker is located at the foot of the “Cliff of Tears” on a large erratic boulder. Several flat stones cover two roughly hewn basins and drains. The easterly face of the boulder appears to have been ‘worked’ and its point, too, faces directly toward the meeting house.

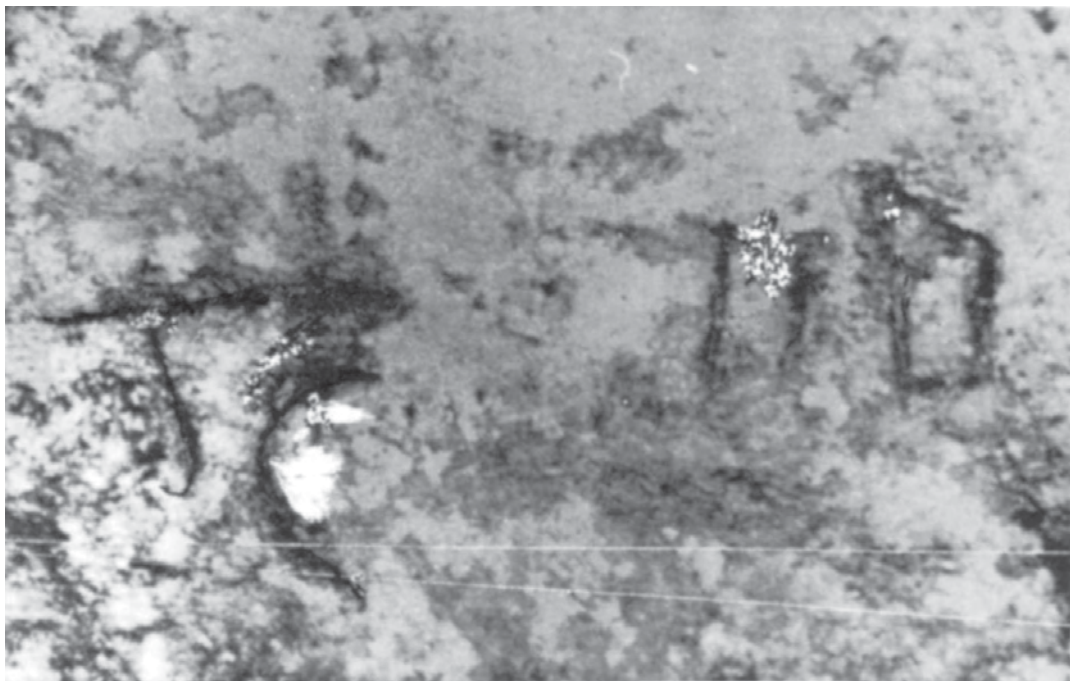
“Cliff of Tears”

This natural formation, rising up to the north of the cairn field, appears to have been the site of some quarrying work in the distant past. Although no drill marks or signs of metal tools have been found, a sufficient amount of broken debris and ‘worked’ holes strongly suggest that someone used materials from this site for rock walls.

The site itself has been named by its peculiar physiological effect(s) on some visitors in the past. Controlled monitoring of visiting groups for vital signs has been done with the assistance of registered nurses. These data have been obtained before, at, and after site visitation. An analysis of the results shows that a consistent lowering of blood pressure is apparent in all subjects at the Cliff of Tears location, particularly during the summer months. Just what this phenomena is, and why the physiological effect is produced, is still an enigma. Speculation aside, it is interesting to note the close proximity of the cairn field and meeting house to the Cliff of Tears. One can only wonder if there is a connection between this strange effect, the ritualistic suggestion of the cairn constructions, and the presence of the meeting house itself?

Follow-up: Thanks to the expertise of John Burke, an electrical engineer from Long Island, NY, and his sophisticated test instruments, it was discovered that a large, long seam of **Magnetite** was present in the Cliff of Tears. This Magnetite, a.k.a. Lodestone, was found with its magnetic, Polar, energies tipped toward the south. Ancient seafarers were known to have used this magnetic stones as crude compasses. Perhaps now, with this additional knowledge, we can better understand why birds avoid the Gungywamp, why humans suddenly burst into tears, or have bleeding noses and gums. This curious natural source of magnetic energy may have been one of the reasons some of the Native American Indians chose the nearby hillside for their cairns and meeting house. It might be noted here that many visitors experienced in dowsing have noted the strangely strong energies coming from the Cliff of Tears. Mr. Burke’s electrical instrumentation has confirmed the dowsers observations in an objective manner.

Author, researcher, and college professor Salvatore Michael Trento, in his fine guidebook ***Field Guide to Mysterious Places of Eastern North America***, Henry Holt , 1997, cites the same results with his instruments.



“CHRISTOGRAM ROCK”

‘Hidden Valley Site’

This crude, rough and badly eroded inscription rock bears a most unusual and out-of-place carving which has been identified by the late Dr. Barry Fell, President of the Epigraphic Society, San Diego, CA., as being a “Christogram.”

On examination of this rock outcropping in the summer of 1979, David P. Barron and owner of the property Carl Vogt I, discovered some oddly shaped marks within an obviously “hammered out and worked” face of the rock itself. These deeply cut grooves resembled a ‘J’ and a ‘C’, with an additional horizontal line cut above them. To the right were noted three additional strokes, having been cut or abraded through a vein of rough quartz.

Various geologists examined the carvings and most agreed that they had been done artificially, e.g., by man. A latex peel was sent to Dr. Fell and he responded enthusiastically, arranging for a site visit within ten days. He noted that variants of this arrangement of symbols were to be found on Byzantine coins in the form of IC (Jesus) and XC (Christ), as written in Byzantine Greek. There are currently examples of the IC to be found at Cockaponsett Point, Guilford, CT, the Newport Tower, Newport, RI, and in several lengthy Ogam inscriptions found in ledge shelters in West Virginia.

On seeing the North Gungywamp Christogram, Dr. Fell correctly predicted that some Chi Rho inscriptions were likely to be found as well. Three years later, at the Vogt Ruins, several were, indeed, discovered ... hidden beneath a heavy lichen and moss covering. These Early Christian symbols may easily date back to the fifth to seventh Century AD, representing the ‘transitional’ form used during that era.

Skeptics and many professional archaeologists have (some without making an on-site visit) dismissed this crude carving as “nothing more than differential weathering”, or, “the initials TC of a local farmer.” However, since the 1979 discovery of these Christograms other researchers have been made more aware of their existence. Ida Jane Gallagher, writer and historian, recognized an IC Christogram as well as an Alpha and an Omega within a lengthy Ogam tract in West Virginia in the mid-1980’s.

During the summer of 1996 member Carrie Winder discovered three more crudely inscribed Chi Rho symbols on the nearly vertical face of a high rock outcropping in the NW sector of North Gungywamp. These were nearly identical to those found in the NE sector. One interesting fact emerged: The symbols were located nearly seven feet above the present, sharply sloping surface. The probable scenario is that these were carved long ago and that the slope had eroded away much of the soil at the foot of the out cropping. The presence of these additional “Transitional Chi Rho” symbols helps to reinforce the authenticity of them all.

SUMMARY

This ends our journey into the paradox and various enigmas associated with the GUNGYWAMP. Whatever your impressions may be, we hope these descriptions and narratives have helped you to enjoy your tour of Groton's ancient ruins. Whether they are 300 years old, or 3,000 years old, the area requires protection and preservation. Hopefully this Guidebook will help preserve the record of what is here and help to conserve our open spaces for generations to come. Your participation in efforts to investigate, protect and preserve this area is welcome in terms of membership in the Gungywamp Society and/or the Early Sites Research Society.

P.S. - Everyone wants to know, "What does Gungywamp mean?"


ANSWER: We honestly don't know. Some references say that it is an Indian name for either 'A place of ledges' or 'A swampy place.' Either would be fitting. From the multitude of spellings 'coming from Colonial town clerks and old records it is difficult to pin down. There is a probability that it was named after the first settlers arrived 1640-1654. If this is true, the present day title may have come from an assimilation of the description 'Spongy Swamp.' We are also informed by Mr. Norman Biggot of the Gunn Clan that Gungywamp means "Church of the People" in old Gaelic.

— Notes of Gratitude —

Photographs and drawings were generously provided by James P. Whittall, Malcolm Pearson, Richard Leclercq, Richard Lynch, Dorothy Reiss, Douglas Schwartz, Carol Hallas, and others (unidentified). Sketches in India ink were rendered by Arthur H. Hayward. Research data on the archaeoastronomy in the major chambers was furnished by Vance Tiede, Yale University, New Haven, CT. Editing assistance was provided by Jim Whittall, Dorothy Reiss, and Patricia Barron. Computer assistance was provided by John A. Rathbun, Sr. Front cover: Dorothy Reiss. Chamber One sketch: Courtesy of Arthur Hayward. Field Team members included Scott and Paulette Buchanan, Carrie and Shannon Winder, Dorothy Riess, Jack Rajotte, Melanie Grimes, Robert Morse, Stephen Squires, Vance Tiede, Jane Aniello, Todd Shannon Porter, Al and Dot Lewis, and others.

GLOSSARY

[The following is a list of terms and general definitions which may or may not be familiar to the casual reader. These pertain to the fields of archaeology, astronomy, geology, prehistory, diffusionism, and related areas of lithic study.]

Ablation	The removal or carrying away of material from the surface of rocks by ice, rain, and soil.
Amerindian	(Amerind) - American Indian, Native American.
Archaeology	(Archeology) - The scientific study of previous cultures based on the examination of physical evidence (e.g. artifacts, habitation sites, etc.) left by peoples of former times.
Artifact	Any object (usually simple) shaped by Man that provides evidence of a previous culture.
Bi-facial	Having opposite surfaces (faces) alike, e.g., as used in describing projectile points.
Cairn	A structure of piled stones used to mark a burial, landmark, or to serve as a memorial, verses ordinary field clearings of dumped stones.
Chi Rho 	A symbol for Christ formed by superimposing the Greek letter P (Rho) over the Greek letter X (Chi) to form a combination symbol . These letters come from the Byzantine Greek word “Christos.” Dozens of variations, from the most simple to highly ornate designs, exist throughout the Christian world.
Chronology	An arrangement of events in the order in which they occurred.
Cist (cyst)	A stone-lined compartment, e.g., a Neolithic burial chamber lined with stones and covered over with stone slabs.
Concentric	Having a common center, e.g., two circles, when one is enclosed by the other.
Corbeled	(corbeling) - An ancient style of architecture in which consecutive courses of stone or wood walling project inward toward an opposing wall, creating an open arch. The arch is closed with capstones.
Cross-quarter days	In astronomy, a point mid-way between solstice/equinox events.
Cupule	A cup-shaped marking or indentation, e.g., as seen in cup-and-ring marks at ancient lithic sites.
Diffusion(ism)	The spread or transmission of cultural traits, versus independent invention or creation.
Dolmen	A prehistoric monument created by placing a single large slab of stone horizontally across the tops of several upright stones.

Dowsing	(Divining) - The ancient practice of searching for water, minerals or other substances and/or objects by the use of divining rods, forked branches, or pendulums.
Enigma	Something that is puzzling; a situation that presents questions without providing ready answers, i.e., a mystery.
Epigraphy	The study of inscriptions found on stone, metal, tiles, pottery, etc, relating to the written word, versus rock art.
Equinox	An event occurring when day and night are of equal length, i.e., when the sun crosses the equator during its annual motion from north to south (about September 23, the Autumnal Equinox) or from the south to north (about March 21, the Vernal Equinox).
Eroded	Worn away or deteriorated by degrees; weathered; ablated, etc.
Erratic	Something that has been moved from its place of origin to another setting, as in a large boulder being moved from one location to another by a glacier and deposited at random and by chance.
Excavation	The technique by which archaeologists carefully dig away layers of earth or debris to expose the material remains of previous cultures or occupations.
Flint	A hard stone, similar to quartz, which fractures uniformly when “worked.” Often used anciently in the making of stone implements.
In situ	referring to an object’s original place, or, on the spot.
Ledge shelter	A natural, protected area formed by an overhanging portion of a solid rock ledge or cliff; a site often used for seasonal occupation.
Lithic	A term used in referring to, or pertaining to stone.
Loess	A fine-grained, yellowish-brown loam deposited by the wind following the retreat of a glacier.
Megalith(ic)	“Big Stone,” e.g., a structure made of huge stones.
Monolith	A single, very large stone sometimes rising in a straight column; also referred to as an orthostat.
“Neo-”	A prefix (ne) meaning new.
Neolithic	New Stone Age. Relating to the last period of the Stone Age and characterized by the use of polished stone implements.
Obsidian	A black or very dark volcanic glass.
Ovoid	Having an oval, or egg shape.

Paleo	A prefix (palae; palaeo; pale) meaning old, ancient, or primitive.
Paleolithic	Old Stone Age. Characterized by the use of crude, chipped stone implements suggesting a hunting culture.
Petroglyph	A symbol or inscription carved into or painted on rock.
Prehistory	The period of time in human development before the use of written records. It occurs at different times in various areas of the world.
Projectile point	A “worked” stone or bone point, as used in blades, arrowheads, darts, lances and spears.
Recumbent	Prone; lying down; fallen down.
Runes	An ancient Scandinavian alphabet originally consisting of twig-like symbols found incised on bone, wood, or stone, as used by Norsemen before the introduction of the Roman alphabet.
Sherd (shard)	A small piece; a fragment, particularly of pottery or glass.
Solstice	A solar event occurring twice yearly, characterized by the sun being farthest from the equator. A solstice occurs on December 21 or 22 and June 21 or 22; the former representing the shortest, and the latter representing the longest day of the year.
Sterile	The absence of artifacts or other evidence of previous occupation.
Stratigraphy	The layers of earth or debris, composed of soil, rocks, clay, etc., in which the most recent layers are deposited on top of older layers. The soil pattern is an important archaeological feature which helps in the relative dating of artifacts.
Trilithon	A structure of stone characterized by two upright slabs supporting a cross piece; as noted in the building of Stonehenge.
Unifacial	A stone tool “worked” on only one side (face).

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ORIENTATION OF STONE CHAMBER ONE THE GUNGYWAMP COMPLEX, GROTON, CT

Vance R. Tiede

The Problem: The discovery in 1987 that a beam of sunlight enters the side beehive chamber of Chamber One on the days of the vernal and autumnal equinox renewed controversy about the provenance of the Gungywamp Complex. While local archaeologists may prefer to interpret the site as a typical 17th to 18th century English colonial root cellar complex (Kra, 1981), the existence of coherent solar orientation is at variance with this interpretation. The problem with the conventional interpretation is that neither English or English colonial farmers constructed drywall masonry root cellars according to solar orientation patterns observed at the Gungywamp. On the other hand, there is a tradition of drywall masonry which includes sophisticated solar orientation in Early Christian Ireland in the 6th to 11th centuries (Tiede, 1993). Could the techniques of archaeoastronomy shed light on which interpretation of the origins of the Gungywamp is the more probable?

Research Design: In an effort to resolve the question of solar orientation, I applied the techniques of archaeoastronomy (Hawkins, 1973) to Chamber One.

Hypothesis - Does the orientation of the Gungywamp's stone Chamber One form a coherent pattern with the rise/set positions of the sun at the solstices (+/- 24 degrees declination), equinox (0 degrees) and Cross-Quarter days (+/- 17 degrees)?

Methodology: Initially, I surveyed Chamber One to calculate theoretical positions of the sunrise on the horizon at various times of the year. Because stone chambers often contain iron ore deposits, frequently producing local magnetic anomalies which may cause azimuth errors when reading the theodolite, I knew that any calculated alignments would require photographic confirmation. Therefore, the final step would be to photograph the event on the appropriate days. If the days fit a recognized pattern of solar orientation, we might be able to offer new evidence on the provenance of the site.

TABLE 1

**Site Date for Calculating Skyline Declination:
Chamber One, Gungywamp**

Latitude = 41 degrees 22' = 41.37 degrees North
Longitude = 72 degrees 3' West
Elevation = 30.48 meters
*Local Magnetic Variation (LMV), June 1991 = 14.7 degrees West
*Annual Change in LMV = 2.1' West
Ground Survey Date: 21 July 1991
Extreme Declination of Sun, 700 AD = +/- 23.76 degrees

Data: Tables 1 and 2 present data used for predicting the day the sun would be aligned with the architecture of Chamber One.

TABLE 2

**Comparison of Theoretical and *Surveyed Solar Alignments
at Stone Chamber One, The Gungywamp**

Azimuth Magnetic	*True	Vertical Angle	Theory	Declination Obsrv.	Error	Event
85.5 deg.	96.2 deg.	+6 deg	0. deg.	-0.71 deg.	0.71 deg.	Equinox Sun Rise
127.3	112.6	+0.5	-17	-16.75	0.25	Winter Cross Quarters
149.7	135	+9.5	-23.76	-24.49	0.73	Winter Solstice Sun Rise
269.83	255.1	+17	0	+0.49	0.49	Equinox Sun Set

* [Estimated value for true azimuth is based on GEOMAG computer simulation developed by U.S. Geological Survey, Branch of Earthquake and Geomagnetic Information, Denver, CO 80225-0046. Higher accuracy will be achieved by using sun sitings with a theodolite in the field. However, a photograph taken of the sunlight inside the chamber is sufficient evidence for their occurrence and is independent of the azimuth errors introduced by local magnetic. anomalies created by iron deposits in the chamber walls or by manually tracking the solar disk in the cross hairs of a theodolite.]

Findings: From the preliminary survey, I was surprised to discover alignments to five of the eight sunrise alignments associated with the Celtic solar festival days. The three alignments which were not detected were those which are not visible because of masking by tree foliage. Figure 1 and Table 3 summarize the solar alignment pattern observed and photographed at the Gungywamp Chamber One.

Conclusion: Gungywamp Chamber One contains a solar orientation pattern fully consistent with Irish Early Christian drywall masonry oratories and at variance with English colonial root cellars observed in the field and as described in historical records (Neudorfer, 1980).

[Ed. Notes - The author, Vance Tiede, has lectured extensively on archaeoastronomy at sites in New England, China, and Europe. He was a student under Dr. Gerald Hawkins. He has been associated with the Gungywamp Society, Early Sites Research Society, and the New England Antiquities Research Association for several years. We welcome his addendum to this publication.]

TABLE 3

Solar Alignments Visible at Stone Chamber One The Gungywamp and Early Christian Festival Days

DARK HALF OF YEAR

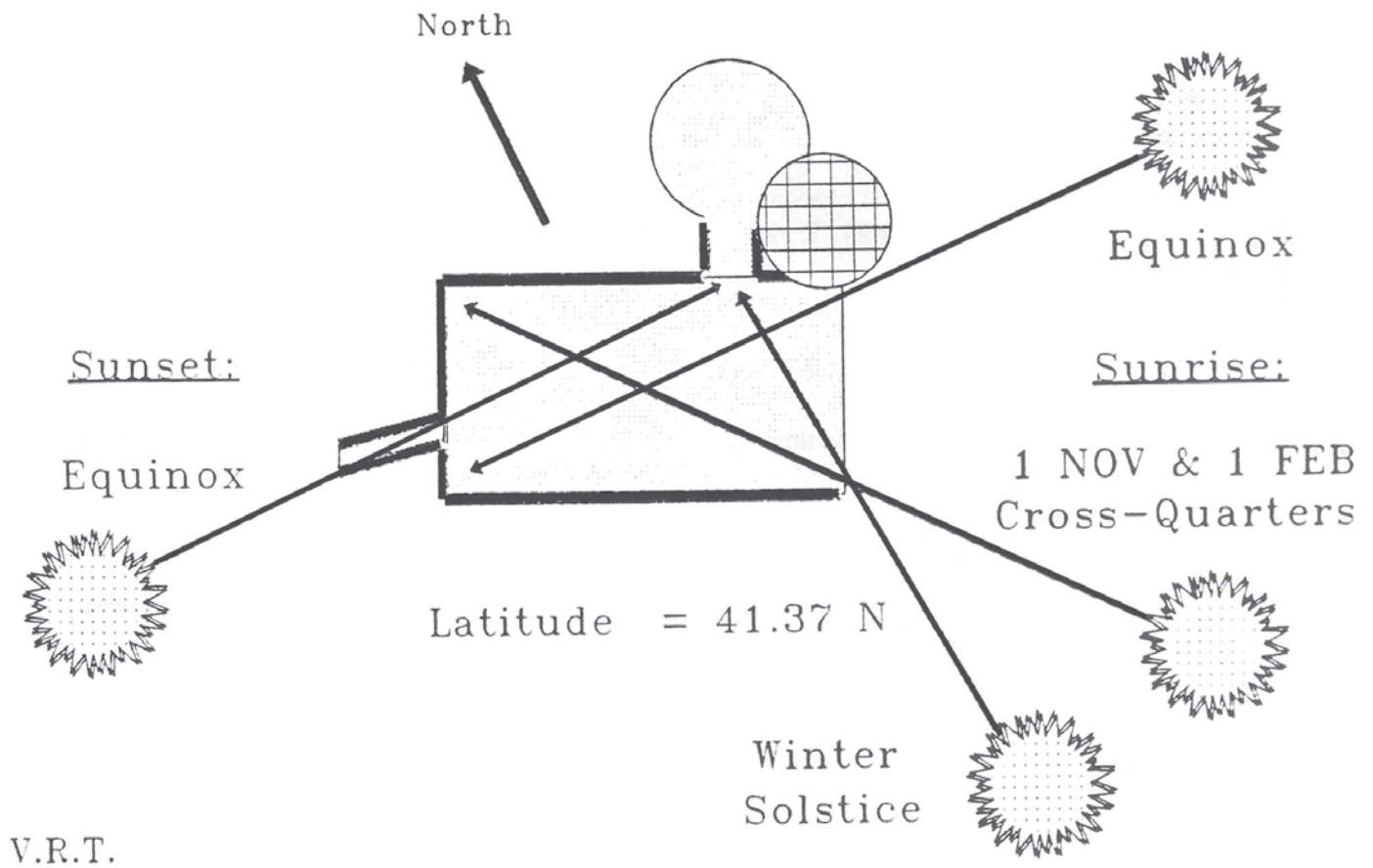
Date		Declination	Orientation/ Local Time
November 1	Celtic Samhain Cross Quarter Male Fire Festival and Christian All-Hallows Eve/ All-Saints Day/Martinmas	-17 deg.	Sunrise along diagonal from entrance/ 0650.
December 22	Winter Solstice Christian Christmas	-24 deg.	Sunrise into side chamber/ 0720
February 1	Celtic Imbolg Cross Quarter Female Fire Festival and Christian Candlemas/St. Brigid's Day	-17 deg.	Sunrise along diagonal from entrance/ 0650
March 21	Vernal Equinox Christian Paschal Cycle Begins	0 deg. 0 deg.	Sunrise along diagonal from entrance/ 0710 Sun from window to side chamber/ 1620

LIGHT HALF OF YEAR

		Declination	Orientation
May 1	Celtic Beltaine Cross-Quarter Male Fire Festival and Pastoral Festival of May Day.	+17 deg.	*NON-EXISTENT
June 22	Summer Solstice Christian St. John's Day	+24 deg.	*NON-EXISTENT
August 1	Celtic Lughnasadh Cross-Quarter Female Fire Festival and Christian Lammas	+17 deg.	*NON-EXISTENT
September 23		0 deg. 0 deg.	*NOT VISIBLE Sun from window to side chamber/ 1720

Sunrise orientation is impossible to observe at this time of year due to tree foliage masking the solar disk on the horizon.

Figure 1 Solar Orientation of Chamber #1



STONEWATCH

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STONEWATCH

NEWSLETTER of the GUNGYWAMP SOCIETY

Written & Edited by the Board Members of the Gungywamp Society

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Winter 2000-01

A YEAR IN TRANSITION

As many of you know, our president, David P. Barron, was in ill health the last two years, and in July of this year we were grieved by his passing. Prior to his death, he and the Gungywamp board members discussed the continued goals and direction of the Society, and we are pleased to announce that we are staying on the course we outlined in those meetings.

During this past year we have continued to give tours throughout the Gungywamp complex, and we have conducted a few exploratory digs in areas which had not been examined previously. One site which we reexamined was the controversial "Christogram" site. After much root cutting and a little bit of dirt sifting, we noted that the site directly in front and around the rock etching was on a small ledge. No artifacts were found at this site, but at another site we uncovered the remains of another small colonial house, complete with root cellar/chamber. At this site we did find a few artifacts, mostly pottery and china bits typical of the colonial period.

CONTACT WITH THE YMCA

One of the most significant activities we have accomplished this year has been a meeting we had with one of the board members of the YMCA. The Y owns a good deal of the Gungywamp land and at present the Y has tentative plans to develop recreational programs at their Groton camp. These programs would center around water activities at their pond and would also include the maintenance of hiking trails throughout the Y-owned land. In October, Y board member John Atkinson called our treasurer, S. Mason, about meeting with the Gungywamp Society to discuss mutual plans for the Y lands, including the Gungywamp sites. On October 31, Gungywamp board members P. Buchanan and C. Hallas met with Atkinson, and the result was quite productive. One of the proposals we made included having at least one reciprocal board member from each group who would attend each other's board meetings. Another plan included joint tours throughout the Gungywamp sites. Most important to each group, we discussed the mutual need for more volunteers.

NEW WEBSITE FOR THE GUNGYWAMP SOCIETY

The Gungywamp Society now has its own official website, Gungywamp.com. [Now hosted at dpnc.org/gungywamp] Our website lists our board members and their functions, and it describes our mission statement. Our site also has links to Connecticut's tourism website and the state's archaeology website.

There are some other websites on the Internet which have Gungywamp in their names, but some of these sites do not represent who and what we are. For this reason, it is important to us to have our own website which describes clearly and accurately the Gungywamp.

STONEWATCH

NEWSLETTER of the GUNGYWAMP SOCIETY

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New Research Findings

One of the goals of the Gungywamp Society is to continue research into the “who, what, when, where, why and how” of certain puzzling sites in the Gungywamp complex. Our researchers are keenly interested in getting at the facts, as much as they exist, to give us the most accurate picture of the Gungywamp’s history. As most researchers know all too well, new research information can result in significant changes in theories which had previously been thought true of a particular site. Such is the case for the alleged “Christogram” rock carvings found in two separate sites in the eastern section of the Gungywamp complex.

The “Christograms” will probably long remain one of the Gungywamp’s most controversial findings. In fact, one of these alleged “Christograms” formed the Gungywamp Society’s emblem since its inception in the late 1970s.

Sometime in the late 1970s-early 1980s, the controversial Dr. Barry Fell, past president of the Epigraphic Society, described certain rock carvings in the Gungywamp as “Christograms” to our past president, D. Barron. One of the “Christogram” rock carvings was described by Fell as the Greek letters *IC*, with a bar over these letters. A *III* carving follows closely after the *IC* carvings. Fell indicated that the bar over the *IC* was the common means of showing an abbreviation, rendering the Greek letters *IC* as an abbreviation for “*Iesu*” (*Jesus/Jesu*). The *III* carved immediately after the *IC* were not given a hard and fast interpretation by Fell, but the suggestion was that it could represent the Trinity. Some observers have seen a fourth *I* added onto the *III* following the *IC*. The *IC III* rock carving measures approximately two inches high and eight inches long.

Recent research into the *IC III* site has revealed some serious flaws with Fell’s “Christogram” interpretation. First, in all authentic forms in which the Greek *IC* is used, it is, without exception, always accompanied by the Greek abbreviation *XC* (*Christos*), and most usually, the Greek word, *NIKA* or *NIKOS* (“Victor”) is found written underneath the *IC XC*. An abbreviation bar is found over the entire *IC* and another over the entire *XC*. The “Christogram” found in the Gungywamp does not include the standard *XC* and *NIKA/NIKOS* inscriptions. The “bar” carved above this alleged “Christogram” in the Gungywamp is not over the *C* but only over the *I*, and there is also a small left-upward notch at the bottom of the *I*, which makes the rock carving look more like the initials *JC* rather than *IC*.

Secondly, one of our researchers and board members, Jack Rajotte, did some land records investigation for the eastern part of the Gungywamp complex. In his research, Rajotte discovered that there was a **John Christopher (JC)** who was a son of Christopher Christopher, a seventeenth century owner of a part of the Gungywamp land. Christopher Christopher served in the Connecticut colony’s early government. Common custom for the colonial time period was the building of rock walls as borders and enclosures. The *JC III* rock carving is found in a small rock ledge outcrop which forms part of an old rock wall.

Our most reasonable conclusion, then, on the controversial *IC III/JC III* rock carving is that it is most likely the carvings of John Christopher's initials. The *III* carvings may stand for his being the third member of his family to bear that name, or the *III* could represent a surveyor's marking, since the carving is found in a rock boundary wall.

Fell postulated that another kind of Christogram, the *Chi Rho*, would most likely be found in the Gungywamp, presumably somewhere near the *JC III* carvings. Sure enough, three years after Fell's postulation, alleged *Chi Rho* carvings were found approximately a quarter of a mile from the *JC III* carvings. The style of these alleged *Chi Rho* carvings were interpreted by Fell as an early version of the Christian Church's Greek letter *Chi Rho* symbol, *X* with the overlapping *P*. The *Chi* and *Rho* letters formed the first two initials (*XP*) of Jesus' designation as the Christ (Greek for "Anointed One," translated from the Hebrew word, "Messiah" with the same meaning). Fell determined the style of the alleged *Chi Rho* symbol in the Gungywamp as being consistent with those of the fourth to seventh centuries found throughout Christendom.



The late Dave Barron at the eastern section of the Gungywamp Complex, at the ruined remains of a chamber. This is the location of the supposed *CHI RHOS* one of which can be seen to the right of Barron. Photo donated by Gungywamp member.

Chi Rho - Ancient monograms of Christ

The alleged *Chi Rho* rock carvings, approximately six obvious carvings which measure roughly two and a half to three inches high, are located on a rock ledge which is part of the apparent remains of a chamber. One speculation has it that some of the *Chi Rho* carvings were made by metal instruments while others were made by rock instruments. In reality, there is absolutely no way to distinguish whether the carvings were made by either metal or rock instruments. (It has been earlier reported that other *Chi Rho* carvings were found at another location, but after repeated searching in that exact location, no other *Chi Rho* carvings were found.)

This past year, a close examination was conducted on these carvings by Gungywamp board members and researchers Paulette Buchanan, Carol Hallas and Jack Rajotte. Over the last year and a half, thorough research

was also conducted by Buchanan on *Chi Rho* styles used throughout most of the Christian Church's history, particularly of the time periods Fell indicated. None of the styles found in the research match the style of the alleged *Chi Rho* carvings found in the Gungywamp.

There are a few styles of the *Chi Rho*:

- (1) a distinct *Chi X* with a clear overlapping of a distinct *Rho P*;
- (2) a prominent *X* with a right-leaning *P* superimposed over the right side of the *X*;
- (3) a *X* which takes the form of a cross (+) with the *P* superimposed over the vertical line of the cross.

Most of the alleged *Chi Rho* carvings found in the Gungywamp show a *P* with a diagonal line joined at the bottom right of the *P*, thus forming an English letter *R*. A few of the alleged *Chi Rho* carvings have a small extension of the diagonal line bisecting the vertical line of the *P*, but not extending long enough to resemble more modern depictions of the *Chi Rho*, and thus still resembling an *R*.

Our most logical interpretation, then, on the alleged *Chi Rho* carvings in the Gungywamp is that they are not authentic representations of *Chi Rho* styles from any era. Like the *JC III* carvings found nearby, the *R* carvings are most likely someone's initial, left behind during the colonial or early American period. A worst case scenario is that these carvings were made by unknown persons sometime after Fell's postulation.

No fourth to seventh century artifacts of European design/origin have ever been found in the Gungywamp. An excavation where these alleged *Chi Rho* carvings are found was conducted in 1995 by Buchanan and overseen by D. Barron. The excavation pit was approximately 3 x 3 x 3 feet wide and deep. This excavation took place directly in front of the rock ledge where some of the alleged *Chi Rho* carvings are found on that rock ledge. All that was uncovered in the excavation was a broken nineteenth century whiskey bottle and a metal oxen shoe.

The Gungywamp researchers know that these findings may be disturbing for some who have long believed the alleged "Christograms" in the Gungywamp offered sure-fire evidence that early Celtic Christian monks had inhabited this area and other regions along eastern North America. But the problem has always been that no one can prove, actually and conclusively, that this is the case. Without a doubt, the Gungywamp still offers mysteries, such as who built the chambers or who carved the eagle-like image into one of the rocks found in a row of standing stones. Our research work continues, however, and we remain dedicated to doing our very best to offer the most likely interpretation to the sites in the Gungywamp.

STONEWATCH

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Summer 2002

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG IN EAST LYME

In May of 2001, C. Hallas and J. Rajotte of the Gungywamp Society, and Ken and Bonnie Beatrice, experienced excavators and associates of the Society, conducted an archaeological dig in East Lyme. The dig crew are all veterans of the Salem African Burial dig site and wanted to determine if the site in East Lyme might also have been inhabited by African-Americans.



Hard Working Dig Crew

A number of years ago Hallas had come across a peculiar dugout construction located nearly a half mile from the nearest road or house site, present or past. Neighborhood lore described this construction as a "slave hut." Someone had excavated into a bank just below a large, flat glacial erratic. The 2-½ foot entry is approached by a six-foot ramp. The "front" south-facing side of the dugout has an 18"-thick dry laid stone retaining wall. None of the other three sides show any signs of walling. An old cart path, nearly obscured now, runs past the entry about 40 feet from the dugout. Located across the cart path, another 24 feet to the south, is an opening in a stone wall. Straight ahead of the opening and running parallel to the stone wall is a vigorous stream.

Six 2-foot test pits were excavated. The area around the dugout was scanned with a metal detector to a radius of 30-40 feet. The lack of artifacts was remarkable. Only a few bits of barbed wire, some ribs of an ancient tractor seat and a baby oxen shoe were found outside the dugout.

Within the interior of the dugout, two more pieces of old tractor seat were found. The dig team expected to find some sort of human personal effects - a penny, button, perhaps a piece of pipe or a bit of glass from a broken bottle. None was found. The only thing that showed up with regularity was pieces of quartz: one large square-foot chunk, pieces, flakes and a stack of quartz rocks. Other than the quartz and iron, only two small pieces of what appeared to be clay pottery and two pieces of hematite were found in the interior of the dugout.

One piece of quartz in particular caught the attention of Hallas. It was a cobble in nearly the center of the dugout. It was larger than a fist and shaped a bit like a small iron. As with all the other rocks found inside the dugout, it was made of white quartz. But this piece showed signs of wear. Its shape fit the hand nicely, with a wide, flat bottom that was blackened and polished smooth from use. It was not until the dig team was nearly finished and ready to close the dig that this stone's possible use was suggested.

As Hallas cleaned out and squared off the last corner to be excavated, she noticed suddenly a seam of gray clay. This suggested that the dugout was actually a clay pit. The iron-shaped, smooth and blackened quartz cobble may have been used to "work" the clay on site, while the large amount of quartz was used for temper. When the clay was exhausted from the site, it is possible the dugout area was then used as a shed or animal pen with some stone walling added.



Quartz Deposit Being Uncovered

It might be interesting to re-open the dig at the dugout site to check if any post holes are extant around the exterior of this dugout, or if any signs of work appear around the large, table-like glacial erratic just above the dugout.

The dig team wishes to thank the landowner for allowing access to the dugout so that this unusual site could be documented. Hallas also personally thanks all who lent a hand in this dig.



Carl Vogt, Sr.

IN MEMORIAM

By P. Buchanan

Carl Vogt, 86, of SE Connecticut, passed away March 23 of this year 2002. Carl Vogt owned a good-sized portion of the Gungywamp complex, and the Vogt family remains dedicated to preserving this land and the archaeological sites found therein.

Carl and the Gungywamp Society's late president, David P. Barron, were longtime friends who shared a great love of the outdoors and of sites of archaeological interest. In the 1950s, after a hurricane came through Connecticut, Carl discovered an intact stone chamber revealed by an uprooted tree that had been blown down in the storm. This small stone chamber, Chamber Site 2, is located and kept preserved on the YMCA property that abuts the Vogt property.

Carl stayed active in his retirement years, preserving his land and sharing the wonders of his land with family and friends. When he was 76, Carl suffered a stroke, and yet, to the best of his ability, he remained keenly interested in Gungywamp Society meetings and our general goings-on in the Gungywamp Complex.

Carl's active support of the Gungywamp Society and his wonderful personality will be sadly missed by those who had the honor to know him. We are most appreciative for the Vogt family's ongoing support of the Gungywamp Society's work of discovery, education and preservation of the sites in the Gungywamp complex.

We dedicate this issue of Stonewatch to Carl Vogt, Sr.

STONEWATCH

NEWSLETTER of the GUNGYWAMP SOCIETY

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THE CHI RHO CONTROVERSY RAGES ON

Two Different Viewpoints Offered

by Vance R. Tiede and P. Buchanan

View I: Vance R. Tiede

I was surprised to learn in a recent *Stonewatch* article (Buchanan 2002) of a new research finding that discards an unconventional interpretation of certain Gungywamp inscriptions as being an Early Christian *nomen sacrum* (Barron and Mason 1990, and Whittall 1986). The *Stonewatch* article claims that the Gungywamp style of *chi-rho* (i.e., Greek initials *XP* for *CRistos*, or Latin *CHRistus*) is unknown to Christendom. The *Stonewatch* article makes a provocative claim, for if true, it would vitiate consideration of the Gungywamp's features as meriting extraordinary archaeological or public attention.

However, the scientific method is a self-correcting process and only the last of contending hypotheses left standing in the light of physical evidence may be accepted as theory. In that spirit, let us reconsider two contending hypotheses regarding the stylistic provenience of the Gungywamp *chi-rhos* with respect to Romano-British iconography.

Philosophy teaches that one cannot logically prove a negative proposition, but one may *disprove* a negative proposition with only a *single* counter-example. Consequently, scientists formulate a negative proposition (or null hypothesis) to test against a positive proposition. For our purposes, let us define two contending hypotheses, and determine which one must be rejected based on available physical evidence, rather than opinion or speculation.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): "The Gungywamp *chi-rhos* ... are not authentic representations of *Chi-rho* styles from any era... the *R* carvings are most likely someone's initials left behind during the colonial or post-colonial period" (Buchanan 2002).

Fell determined the style of the alleged *Chi Rho* symbol in the Gungywamp as being consistent with those of the fourth to seventh centuries found throughout Christendom.... Over the past year and a half, thorough research was also conducted by Buchanan on *Chi Rho* styles used throughout most of the Christian Church's history, particularly of the time periods Fell indicated. *None of the styles found in the research match the style of the alleged Chi Rho carvings found in the Gungywamp.* (Buchanan 2002)

Positive Hypothesis 1 (H₁): The Gungywamp *chi-rho* style (Figure 1) is represented in Early Christian art history of the fourth to seventh centuries.

Analysis: H₀ may be accepted so long as no physical evidence supporting H₁ can be cited. However, such evidence may be found in the scholarly literature of Romano-British Early Christian iconography. Figure 2 shows a simplified *chi-rho* style (i.e., “P” with a diagonal “\” overstrike) that is incised into a ceramic chard reported from the archaeological excavations of the Roman Fort (4th century) at Richborough, Kent, England (Hamlin 1992, Greene 1974, and Thomas 1985). It matches the style of the Gungywamp *chi-rho*. Moreover, 14 additional monogram *chi-rhos* (i.e., “P” with a “-” overstrike) carved into stone are reported from coastal Britain and Ireland (Hamlin 1972).

Fig. 1: Rubbing, N. Gungywamp, CT Fig. 2: Incised Ceramic Chard, 4th Century Roman Fort, Richborough, Kent, England.

Conclusion: The available physical evidence leads us to reject the null hypothesis that the “Gungywamp Chi-rhos are not authentic representations of Chi-rho styles from any era.” Rather, logic forces us to accept the proposition that the Gungywamp *chi-rhos* do match a known style from Romano-Britain. Therefore, the Early Christian provenience hypothesis for the Gungywamp *chi-rhos* passes a critical test on the path to a viable theory. Q.E.D.

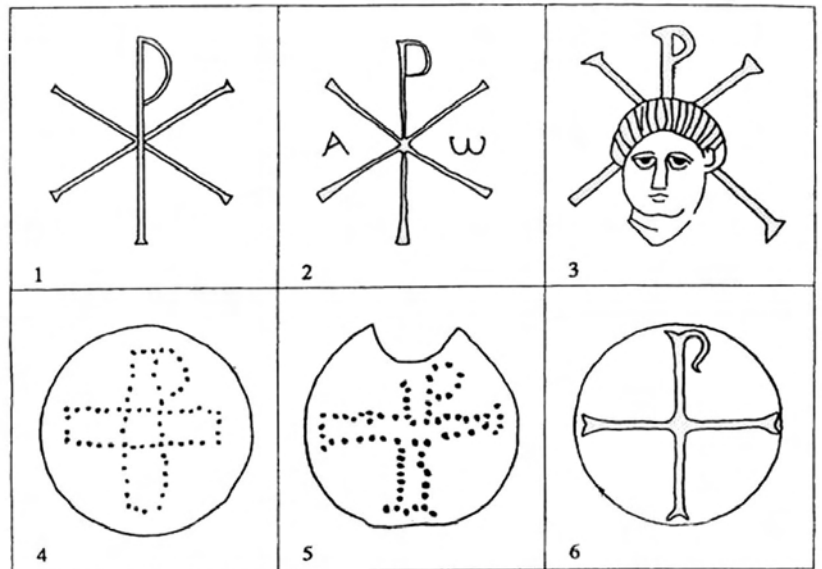
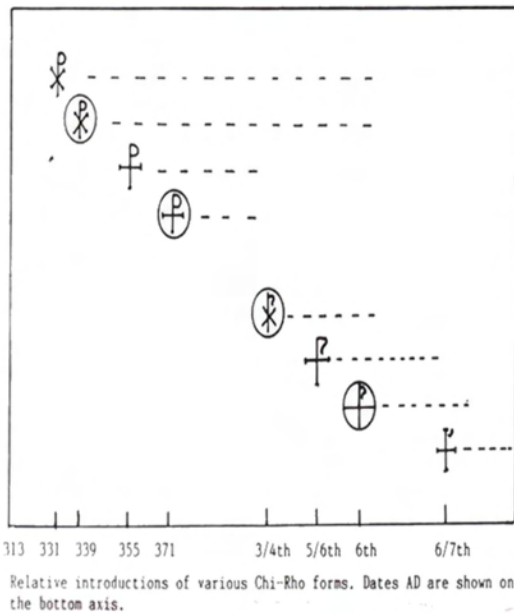
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Response to Vance R. Tiede's Viewpoint -- View II:

P. Buchanan

What is most remarkable about *Chi Rho* styles prevalent in early and medieval Christendom is that they are fairly consistent. There are variations of the same theme of *Chi Rhos* found throughout Eastern, Western and African Christendom, but they all follow accepted patterns. Note the following *Chi Rho* styles:



Due to the controversy over the possibility of *Chi Rho* inscriptions on ledges in the Gungywamp, I consulted with archaeologists in Great Britain and described the Gungywamp inscriptions to them. The archaeological staff at Shepton Mallet, Somerset, England, provided me with descriptions of Chi Rhos that had been found at Shepton Mallet, Kent, Dorset, Sussex, and at Kirkmadrine, Galloway, Ireland. The dates of all samples ranged from the fourth to sixth centuries. None of the below styles match the Gungywamp *R* inscriptions.

1. Basic Constantinian *Chi-Rho*, from a wall painting at Lullingstone Roman Villa, Kent (4th century).
2. Constantinian *Chi-Rho* with Alpha and Omega Greek letters, from same site.
3. Constantinian *Chi-Rho* with superimposed head, possibly of Christ, from a mosaic at Hinton St. Mary Villa, Dorset (4th century).
4. *Chi-Rho* design punched into silver-alloy amulet found in East-West burial from Shepton Mallet, Somerset (4th-5th century).
5. Germanic-style brooch with *Chi-Rho* style similar to Shepton Mallet sample, from Sussex (5th century).
6. *Chi-Rho* on a memorial stone at Kirkmadrine, Galloway (5th-6th century).

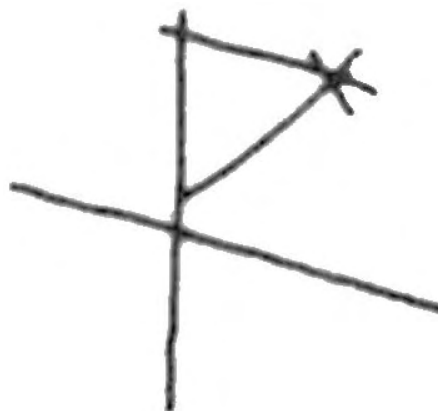
In October of 2002, I contacted via e-mail Dr. Kevin Greene (the same Dr. Greene cited in Vance Tiede's article), Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Newcastle in England. Dr. Greene's comments were not favorable toward the Gungywamp's **R** inscriptions being genuine Chi Rhos, and he gave this explanation:

Like the Viking settlement on Newfoundland, I would expect Irish monks to leave substantial traces, since monasteries normally had earthworks or stone banks around them, and buildings made of stone when available. They also produced many stone crosses, altar slabs, and decorative metalwork whose production leaves moulds, scraps of metal slag, etc. While absence of evidence is not necessary evidence of absence, I do not think that undated chi rho carvings are much to go on!

Dr. Greene's mention of iron slag gives reason for pause because the Gungywamp area does have evidence of iron slag. But before some folks start putting two and two together and coming up with anything but four, there is a less-than-dramatic explanation for the iron slag. The iron slag in the Gungywamp has already been dated to early colonial times, and document evidence uncovered by Jack Rajotte confirms that Gov. Winthrop's sons mined for iron in the Gungywamp during the seventeenth century. Nowhere does evidence exist in the Gungywamp of major earthworks, stone banks, stone crosses, stone buildings (larger than the chambers present in the Gungywamp), altar slabs or decorative metalwork.

Aside from the above explanations, there are a few serious flaws in Tiede's argument that the **R** inscriptions are authentic *Chi Rhos*. First, I take issue with his stone-rubbing depiction that he made of one of the **R** inscriptions. In 2001, C. Hallas, J. Rajotte and I took our own rubbings of these inscriptions and we painstakingly examined each inscription at every angle and with different light sources. We each noted that on every **R** inscription, the single diagonal line that forms the **R**'s right stem does NOT continue upward past and to the left of the vertical back of the **R**, with the exception of one of the **R**'s which does have a very slight upward extension past the back. But this small extension does certainly not qualify this one **R** inscription as a *Chi Rho*. The bottom line with rubbings, especially when made on the rough surface of ledge on which the **R** inscriptions are found, is that they can be made to depict things which simply are not there.

The second major problem in Tiede's argument is his use of a *Chi Rho* inscribed pottery shard found in Kent, England to prove his idea that a single diagonal line *Chi Rho* was used in early Christianity. The Kent shard does indeed depict an authentic *Chi Rho*. But the fact that it is a shard does not give any indication of how it was positioned on the whole pottery piece! Only in relatively modern times has the *Chi Rho* been simplified to a single diagonal line on a vertical P. Certainly, at no time during early and medieval Christianity was the single diagonal line used. A simple clockwise turn of the shard depiction provided in Tiede's article demonstrates that the *Chi Rho* does indeed conform to other existing *Chi Rho* styles of early Christendom (a vertical X with a diagonal P).



When viewed accurately from this position the shard's *Chi Rho* is a perfect match to other similar *Chi Rhos* found in mosaics and on church walls and whole vessel pieces. The proper positioning of the Kent shard's *Chi Rho* also demonstrates the evenness of the **X**, rather than the lopsided **X** of the incorrectly positioned *Chi Rho* shown in Tiede's article.

So what can be logically and reasonably concluded about not only the **R** inscriptions but also the **JC III** inscription found in the Gungywamp? As put forth in the Winter 2002 Stonewatch, it is most likely that both the **JC III** and **R** inscriptions are survey markings, since both are near or part of stone walling.

It would be wonderful to find some "smoking gun" artifact in the Gungywamp that would indicate the strong likelihood of early Celtic Christian involvement in the area. *But the reality is that none such evidence has ever been found!* Nonetheless, the controversy over the interpretation of the sites in the Gungywamp is now an irreversible part of the Gungywamp's history, and for that reason I believe it is important to include the various viewpoints in presentations of the Gungywamp sites. The "traditional" controversial side -- that there were definitely Celtic Christian monks in the Gungywamp -- has been told for many years and at the exclusion of factual details from investigations that have yielded far better explanations of the sites. Balance is long overdue! But regardless of the viewpoint, what is important is that we continue to preserve all of the sites of the Gungywamp because they are part of the history of New England, however they are interpreted. This is especially important now that housing and commercial development has at times been allowed to run roughshod over areas of historical significance. We are thankful for those folks and organizations that are helping us keep the Gungywamp preserved for future generations.

Latest Updates on Gungywamp Sites

The Double Circle of Stones

by Former Gungywamp Society Researcher C. Hallas

Edited by P. Buchanan

Below is a summary some of the double circle of stones at the southern end of the Gungywamp.



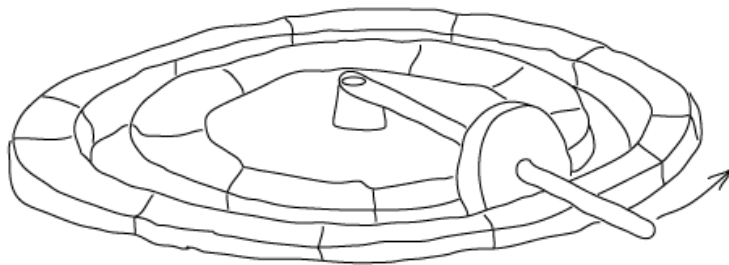
Photos by Charles Clough

This entire area appears to be part of a colonial era homestead. A foundation near the stone circle has been attributed for years to a family named Adams. While my own research shows that an Adams family did move to the vicinity in the mid-eighteenth century from Rhode Island, the Gungywamp Society does not have any documentation in its archives which shows that this particular foundation was owned by the Adams family. Three earlier researchers, Eva Butler and George and Nancy Jackson, concluded that the Adams family did live in the Gungywamp site near the stone circle, but we have not been able to locate any of their documentation.

The double circle of stones near the traditional location of the Adams site has been examined and excavated regularly over the past 70 years. The first documented reference that I have found to the stone circle is that of John Dodge. The following are his 1965 drawings of the stone circle and his interpretation of the stone circle as an intact millsite:



Dodge is the first researcher/explorer of the Gungywamp area (his site review, written in 1965, is in our files). On page 3 of his site description he refers to "the root cellar, stone circle, etc." (notice he uses the singular when he describes the root cellar because the second chamber was not discovered until 1975). Dodge contacted Mrs. Eva Butler of Ledyard, a noted local area researcher and ethno-historian of the mid-twentieth century. She told him that the first investigation of the site that she knew of was done in the early 1930s. We have no information about any possible research done at that time.



Over the next few years, Dodge researched the history of mills constructed in this manner. He found many diagrams and references. These can be seen in the maps he eventually produced. He also researched mills and millers in the southeastern part of Connecticut, but could not attribute the Gungywamp's double stone circle to any

mill, tanner, etc. from the region. My own modest research shows that mills of this size and shape were used for many things: as cider mills; for crushing seashells for mortar, and mixing mortar; for crushing bark for leather tanning; for producing gunpowder; for crushing quartz in pottery making.

In the 1940s and '50s the double circle of stones was explored by Andrew Kowalski of Glastonbury. He was a very ambitious collector/digger of Indian artifacts in the mid-twentieth century. He amassed a large collection, but only vaguely documented his finds. A large part of his collection was given to the State Museum of Natural History. We have been inventorying and cataloguing this collection at the Office of the State Archaeologist, but I have not seen any references to the Gungywamp area.

In the mid 1960s the center of the stone circle was supposedly excavated by Frank Glynn. Glynn was a very

thorough and capable avocational archaeologist who was a Wesleyan graduate, and a longtime member and president of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut. He had done considerable site work in southeastern Connecticut. Glynn seemed to enjoy a good mystery, as his areas of research indicate. Besides his work at standard archaeological sites, he was instrumental in researching the Westford Knight and involving T.C. Lethbridge in his investigation. His work is the basis upon which most current speculations on the Knight stand. Our files do not have any of his research.

In 1966, Glynn joined NEARA, probably through his association with John Dodge, and he was appointed “chief archaeologist.” Unfortunately, Glynn passed away in 1968 at the age of 63. Perhaps NEARA retains his files or copies of his work, as a subsequent NEARA investigator refers to Glynn’s work at the Gungywamp’s millsite/ double circle of stones. The following statement was later made by the late James Whittall of the Early Sites Research Society (ESRS) concerning Glynn’s excavation:

Frank Glynn, a Connecticut archaeologist, going on the theory that the double ring was a tan bark mill, excavated the center area of the rings, looking for any sign of a cutout for a centerpost to support an axle arm for a pivoting crushing wheel. There was nothing.

Since we have no documentation, we don’t know if this true.

The Gungywamp guidebook written by the late Dave Barron mentions a “husband and wife team of archaeologists from Yale around 1960” as having excavated at the stone circle, and also that “no report of their excavation findings has been discovered.” I am not sure who this team was, or even if this team actually existed. I recently spoke to Nancy Jackson, half of the husband and wife team who did the first minimal excavation of the “Adams” foundation. She told me that while she and her late husband had examined the stone circle site, they did not excavate there.

The last documented excavation conducted at the stone circle took place in the summer of 1990. This was directed by ESRS’s Jim Whittall. ESRS was/is a group of avocational archaeologists and history enthusiasts interested in stone chambers, inscriptions and other related antiquities. ESRS was founded in the 1970s and was headed by Mr. Whittall until his death in the late 1990s. Whittall designed and carried out most of the archaeological work done in the Gungywamp along with the Gungywamp Society. During the excavation of the summer of 1990 this combined group excavated fifty-four square meters, nearly the entire flat ledge upon which the stone circle lies. An earlier excavation was conducted by Whittall in 1988 at the stone circle in which Paulette Buchanan was a participant. We have not found an artifact inventory or field notes for either of Whittall’s excavations in the Gungywamp, so we must rely solely on an article written by Whittall for his ESRS newsletter.

Whittall claimed in his article that a quarried quartz vein was found in the uncovered ledge, possibly the origin of the quartz flakes and two broken bifaces and a scraper found during the dig. He also found several tiny pieces of glazed redware and, on the north side of the feature, numerous hammerstones. He mentioned that the northwest area was “highly disturbed,” but we don’t know how or by whom.

Because Whittall thought the center of the circle had been “highly disturbed” in the past, he stated “no work was undertaken” there. Yet strangely enough, he observed in the very next sentence, “The lack of a stone wheel and a center posthole or pivot stone noted in other mills of this type puzzled us.” I don’t know why he came to this conclusion when he never excavated the center of the circle.

Whittall also found some charcoal scatter adjacent to the outside rim of the stone circle. He had this carbon

dated and was given a date of approximately 455 A.D. Unfortunately, he was vague about where precisely those “small amounts of charcoal” material were located. He did not state that it was found within the actual stonework of the circle structure.

The Rows of Standing Stones

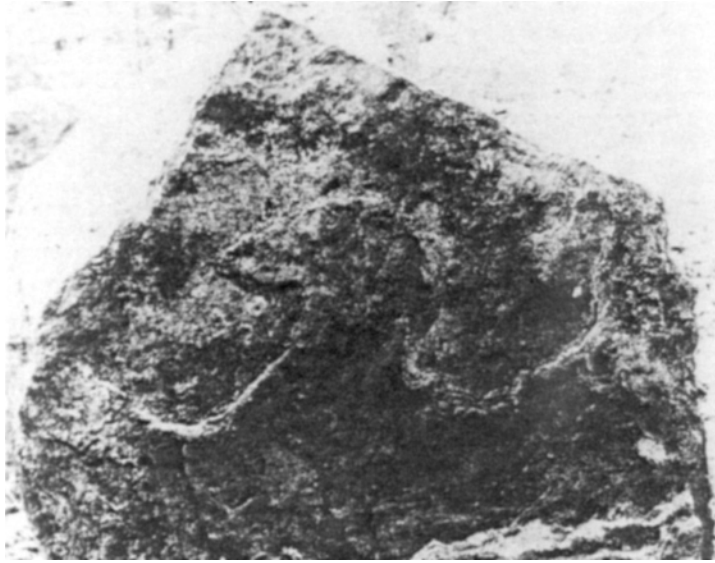
With Carved Bird Effigy

by P. Buchanan

Everyone loves a good mystery, and the rows of standing stones in the southeastern Gungywamp definitely provides plenty of fodder for fertile imaginations! Especially when it comes to trying to explain the “Bird Effigy” carved on one of the standing stones.



Drawing by the late Art Hayward, Sr.



Depiction of Bird Effigy. Photo by Charles Clough.

There is an array of stone walls coursing throughout the Gungywamp complex, and many of them zigzag all over the place with no apparent rhyme or reason. Other stone walls are quite straight and uniform.

The two rows of standing stones may have been connected at one time. Both rows run roughly north and south with a slight bow in both rows. If the rows were connected at one time then the northern row would have snaked at a southeast direction to join with the southern row.

Before an attempted explanation is given of the rows of standing stones, another stone wall structure must be described. One of the walls within the south-central section of the Gungywamp has some similarities to the rows of standing stones. This similar wall also runs in a north-south direction and is on the part of the trail system that runs roughly parallel to a swamp and North Gungywamp Road. This similar rock wall is about 100 feet away from the row of standing stones and has periodic standing stones between traditional rock walling, two stone bridges between boulders in the rock wall, and small “cursing stones” on top of the boulders. The “cursing stones” were explained by the late Dave Barron as indicative of an old Celtic tradition dealing with grudges held by one member of the community over another. The offended party would find a stone as big as his grudge against his neighbor, the priest would put the curse on the stone, and the stone would be placed in a certain area. But does this quaint Irish tradition have any place in the Gungywamp?

Throughout Great Britain and Ireland, some stone walls were built using the intermittent standing stone method. The standing stones simply provided more strength and stability to the rough field stone walls. So it wouldn’t be at all unusual for colonial settlers from Great Britain to have built similar-styled rock walls in southeastern New England. What is unusual about this particular stone wall, which has similarities to the rows of standing stones, is that it has stone bridges and various-sized rounded stones on top of the boulders that are a part of the stone walling.

Opposite this stone wall and adjacent trail is a hillside with steep ledge. The trail that exists now was the same trail system that existed during colonial times (called the “main highway” according to contributing researcher Jack Rajotte) since many of our most important colonial sites are alongside this trail. Given the hillside and steep slope of ledge opposite the trail and rock wall, and also given the location of the swamp system located about 30-50 feet down a slight decline on the other side of the wall, it seems very likely that colonial folks built the two stone bridges to provide an opening for water run-off to keep the trail from becoming too muddy and

impassible. The rounded stones (“cursing stones”) on top of the boulders were most likely cleared from the trail or used to cobble the trail when the path became too muddy, even with water diverted under the stone bridges. These seem to be far more reasonable and practical explanations to this particular rock wall and stone bridge structure than the explanation given that the boulders are “altars” upon which “cursing stones” were placed.

In 1980, D. Barron led a team to discover more about the rows of standing stones that begins about 50 feet from the rock wall with the stone bridges. Barron and his team dug down approximately 12-18 inches around selected standing stones in the south row and found that the stones were set into sockets formed of “small rocks, cobbles and debris” to help keep them standing erect.

Aside from the Bird Effigy, another puzzling feature with the rows of standing stones is the cobbled area on the trail (east) side in front of the southern row. In the early 1990s, Dave Barron and I unearthed some of the cobbles and we found a flat stone covering a post hole that was about 38 centimeters (15 inches) deep. There was little sediment in the hole and the soil around the hole was very clay-like and compact.

During every tour I’ve conducted, I ask folks for their opinions on the matter, and I get a variety of explanations. Those who believe that early Celtic Christian monks settled in the Gungywamp in the fifth to eighth centuries explain that these rows were built by the monks (why?), and that the Bird Effigy represents the symbol for the Apostle John, the writer of the fourth Gospel. (In Christian tradition, Matthew is represented as the Man, Mark as the Lion, Luke as the Ox, and John as the Eagle.) Others believe that native Americans erected these rows of standing stones as perhaps memorial markers or as a calendar of the moon or other heavenly body. Indian cultures likewise used images of birds and other animals, so it wouldn’t be too unusual for them to carve a bird effigy onto one of the stones, if they were the builders. Others have indicated that perhaps the rows could have been used to herd and corral livestock.

STONEWATCH

NEWSLETTER of the GUNGYWAMP SOCIETY

Written & Edited by the Board Members of the Gungywamp Society

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The Calendar Chamber

By P. Buchanan

Controversy continues to swirl in all directions regarding the Gungywamp chambers and other chambers found throughout the northeastern United States. Reportedly, there are about 400 such chambers, of various sizes and shapes scattered throughout New England alone.

American Indians in New London County believe that their ancestors built the chambers in the Gungywamp. Some people believe that the chambers and other sites in the Gungywamp are aligned with the pyramids at Giza and Stonehenge in England and therefore contain mystical energy lines. Early Sites Research Society (ESRS) and others believe that a wide range of Europeans and/or Mediterranean sea peoples built the chambers and traversed throughout North America long before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. ESRS has cited a Thompson, Connecticut chamber's charcoal pit with having a radiocarbon date of approximately 1200 AD to bolster their theory that Europeans arrived in North America centuries before Columbus.

Europeans before and during Columbus' time were quite fascinated with the possibility of lands west of Europe. The sixth century travels of St. Brendan the Navigator from the Celtic Isles were known in Columbus' day, and contemporary maps often depicted -- somewhere in the Atlantic -- an island named after St. Brendan. But Brendan's *Navagatio* is peppered throughout with fantasy, and it is difficult to discern truth from fancy.

The Nordic *Sagas* also describe westward sailing odysseys, and parts of the *Sagas'* description of land masses in the northwestern Atlantic are quite accurate. Afterall, the eleventh century Nordic settlement of L'anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland was found in part because of the descriptions in the Nordic legends. But fantasy and legend interweave frequently among the geographic descriptions in the *Sagas* and so, as with Brendan's *Navagatio*, this source cannot be taken as complete truth either.

Somewhere around 330 BC, an educated Greek named Pytheas sailed from present-day Marseille, France and journeyed around the British Isles and Denmark, and evidence seems to suggest he traveled as far west as the ice packs of Iceland. Voyages, or tales of voyages, previous to Columbus do indicate that it was entirely possible for Europeans of various epochs to sail westward. But the burning question remains: Did they in fact accomplish landfall on mainland North America?

What does this have to do with the Gungywamp's chambers, and all those other chambers scattered about in the northeastern United States? Some would say plenty, since what records do exist of westward sailing ventures offer enough compelling evidence of pre-Columbian European contact in North America. And surely, a radiocarbon date of 1200 AD in a Thompson chamber seems to support that theory. But results from radio-

carbon dating have to be taken cautiously because all sorts of factors can produce inaccurate and misleading conclusions. These factors can range from mistaking roots burned in a natural forest fire for charcoal produced by man-made fire, to blatant tampering of samples to produce the desired “evidence.” In stating this, no accusations against specific individuals are being made; it’s just the way things are in all aspects of archaeology.

Traditional archaeologists insist that the chambers do not vary from known root cellar constructions in various parts of the United States and Canada. In fact, websites exist which depict how anyone can construct a root cellar, and these sites offer descriptions on all types of root cellars. In all fairness, the samples of root cellars depicted on such websites do certainly bear a striking resemblance to the Gungywamp Calendar Chamber especially.

It must be remembered that what evidence has been unearthed in the Gungywamp, particularly around the chamber sites, indicates colonial and post-colonial working sites. There is a mill site just a short distance from the two intact chambers. There is a stone enclosure also not too far from the mill site which seems to indicate that it was either a storage facility possibly or a drying area for tanned or dyed goods. Could the chambers have also been constructed and used for storage by colonial or post-colonial people? As for the calendar feature in the one large chamber, it would not have been extraordinary for colonial builders to erect a chamber with a solar equinox feature; spring and fall seasons were very important to colonial people for planting and harvesting.

Whatever explanations and theories abound about the chambers, the important thing to remember is that they should remain protected. The equinox feature built into the large intact chamber we hope will remain a fascinating feature for many more generations to enjoy.



Photo by Charles Clough.

Chamber 1 Site (Calendar Chamber). This chamber is called the Calendar Chamber because the vent at its back allows the mid-afternoon sun to shine into the chamber around the time of the spring and fall equinox. The vent opening can be seen at the back of the chamber.



Photo by Charles Clough.

Chamber 1 Site (Calendar Site). This is the west side, or back, of the Calendar Chamber Site where the vent is located.

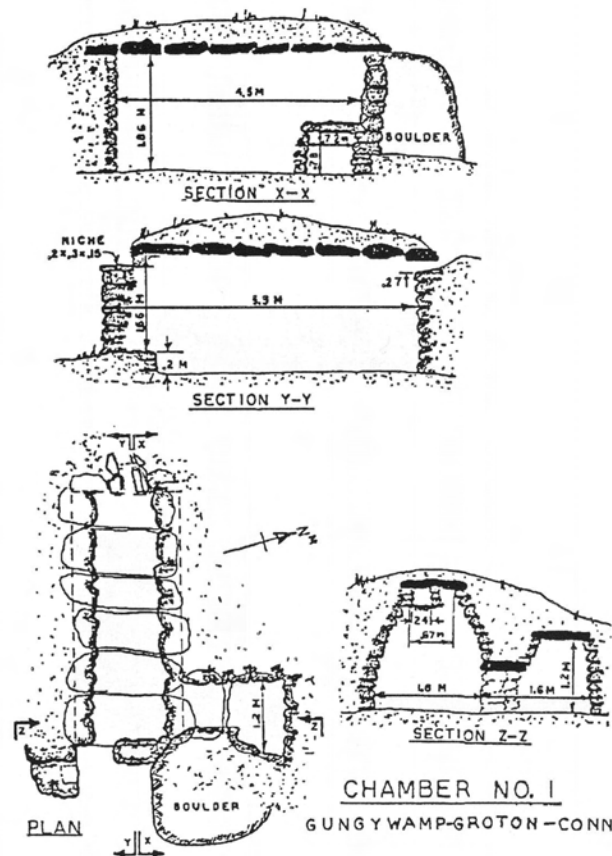


Diagram of Chamber 1 Site (Calendar Chamber).

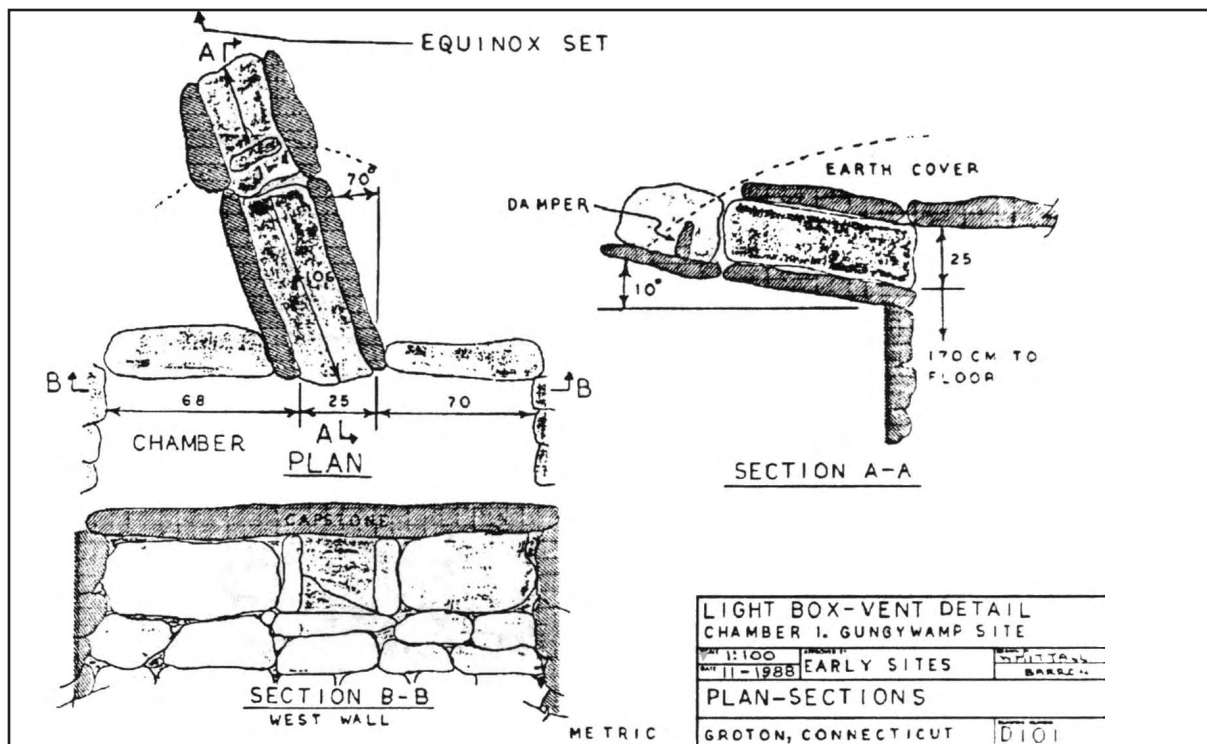


Diagram of vent in Chamber 1 (Calendar Chamber).

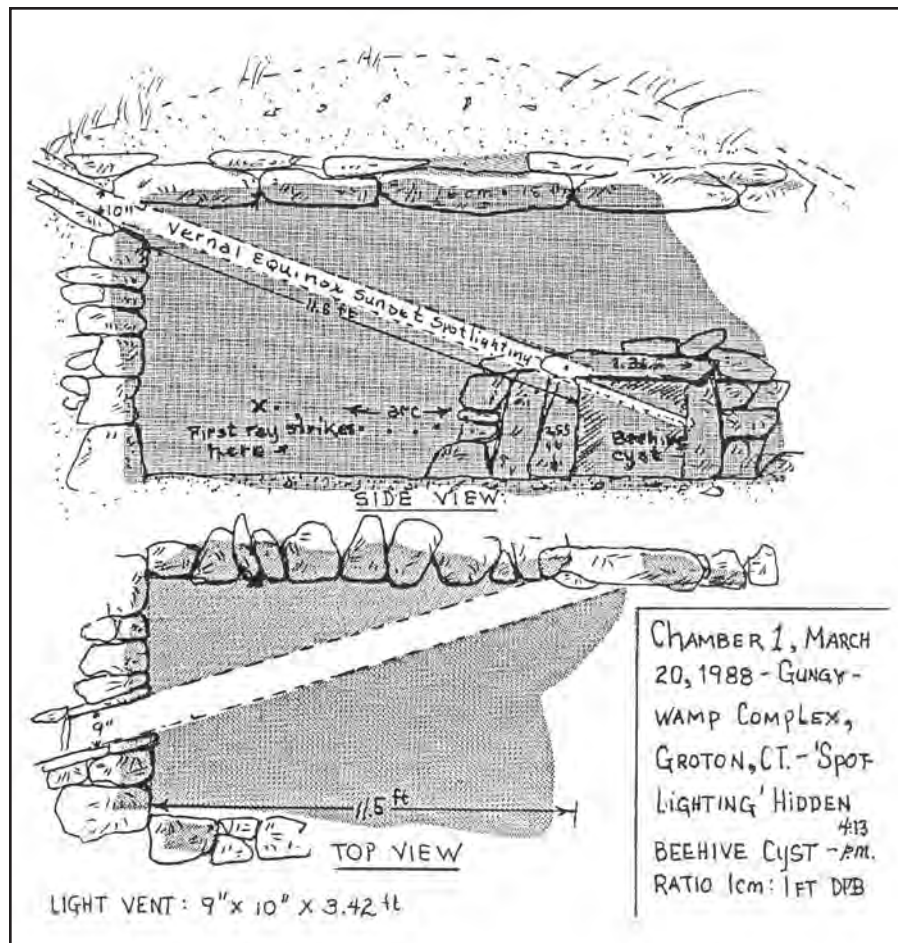


Diagram of equinox light beam in Chamber 1 (Calendar Chamber).



Photo by Charles Clough.

Chamber 2 Site. This site was uncovered after a hurricane in the mid-1950s blew down a tree. The fallen tree's root system unearthed the opening to this chamber. It is located roughly 50 feet to the west from Chamber 1.

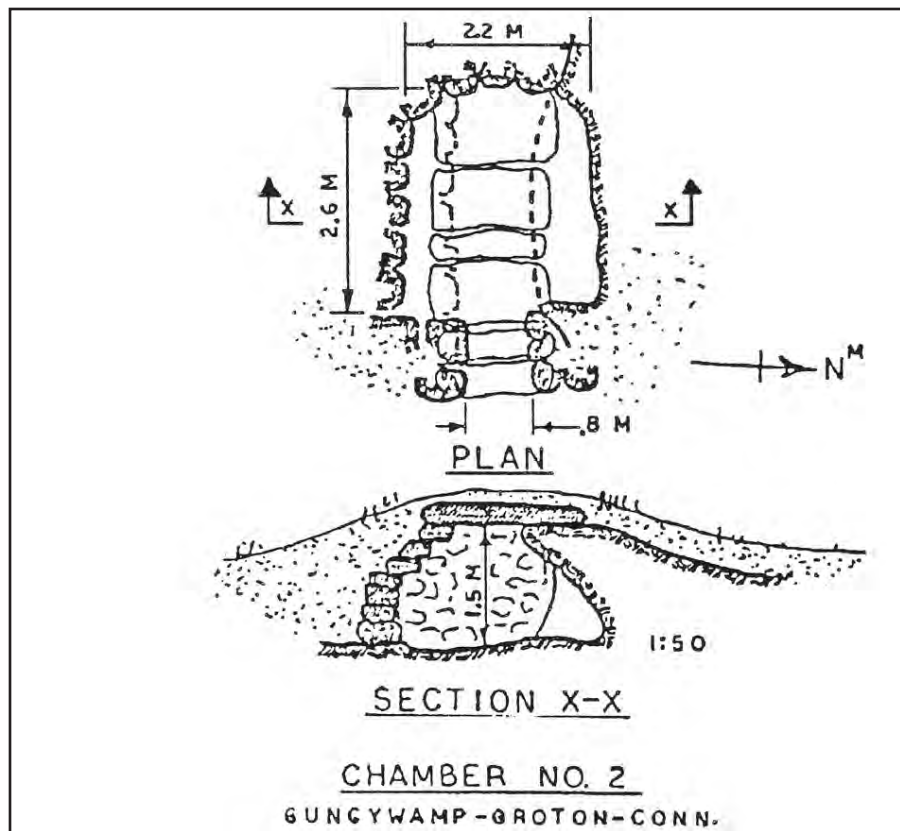


Diagram of Chamber 2 Site.

Explanations for the Rows of Standing Stones

By P. Buchanan



Photo by Charles Clough.

Row of Standing Stones, depicting the Eagle Effigy standing stone. Two disjointed rows of standing stones exist in the Gungywamp, running roughly north and south. The stone with the spread-winged eagle carved into it is approximately in the middle of the southernmost row of standing stones.

Those two rows of standing stones are just so dang puzzling! What explanation do we have for that eagle's head carving on one of the stones? This particular row of standing stones is distinct from the standing stones found in some of the nearby rock walls in the Gungywamp area, and in other areas, such as in Salem, Connecticut and Rhode Island that we've observed. Here are some *possible* explanations for the use of standing stones:

What we behold as we gaze perplexed at the rows of standing stones in the Gungywamp (and elsewhere in the region) seems to be the skeletal remains of a traditional British-styled rock wall in which the standing stones were used as a support system for fieldstones. This explanation is not too off-the-wall (forgive the pun!). Farther down from the two rows of standing stones and on the same trail, but on the *opposite* side of that same trail, is another fieldstone rock wall. Lo and behold, standing stones are found placed periodically within that same stone wall. Just as with the two rows of standing stones, these standing stones are lined up with their broad sides back to front, not side to side. However, the gaps between these standing stones set in the rock wall structure are larger than the approximate one to two-foot gaps between the standing stones in the two rows.

But if the two rows of standing stones are nothing but a support system for a long since gone fieldstone wall, then what about that bird carving? Why would someone carve a bird's head and wings on a standing stone

only to use that standing stone within a rock wall where the carving couldn't be seen? If the two rows of standing stones really are nothing more than a support system for a colonial stone wall, then *perhaps* the bird carving was made on that flat standing stone before the wall builders even thought to use that stone for a rock wall. *Perhaps* the standing stone was originally intended as some kind of marker (cemetery, property, whathaveyou). *Perhaps*, the eagle-carved standing stone was a reject in some other project but its shape was just right to be used as a support standing stone in a colonial rock wall. I've built rock walls since I was a teenager; I and other rock wall builders will tell you much the same -- you use whatever rock you can get to make a fit!

We know that the Gungywamp area was used for grazing of livestock (most likely sheep) because of the fact that there are so many rock wall enclosures and there is no top soil for growing crops. We also know that the tan bark mill was used to tan hides. We also know that the row of standing stones, as well as a number of other sites, are right along the path that contributing researcher Jack Rajotte discovered was referred to as the "main highway" during colonial and post-colonial (early American) times. The closeness of the gaps between each standing stone in the row of standing stones

1. may have been used to corral sheep into a pen (the row of standing stones forms one side of a rock wall enclosure), or,
2. may have had a rope stretched across one side of the row used to tie up sheep being corralled through the standing stone gaps. Tying up the sheep as they stood within each standing stone gap could have been used so as to shear the sheep for wool or to slaughter the sheep to then skin their hides for tanning. The row of standing stones is not very far from the tan bark mill, intact chambers and chamber remains, and a stone foundation where a small house (the supposed "Adams House") once stood.

Taking all the sites in context with each other, and especially their close proximity to the main path ("main highway" as apparently referred to in colonial times), it seems reasonable to explain the row of standing stones as having some use in the agricultural characteristic of colonial and post-colonial Gungywamp.

Gungywamp Remembrances

By P. Buchanan

We live in a time and place in which commercial and residential development has taken over large portions of woodlands and former farmland. Along with development have come loss of history, loss of natural areas, and more hustle and bustle of humans, their machines and their habitats.

Some towns across the country are taking steps to prevent or slow down rampant development in their towns by establishing open spaces and by enforcing minimum acreage per housing lot. These are good policies to enact, and it is these kinds of policies that will help to preserve places such as the Gungywamp lands for future generations to enjoy.

Part of what makes the Gungywamp area enjoyable is the recollections of people who hiked its trails twenty or more years ago. One such person is Diane Porter Dix. Her daughter, Maia Porter, emailed the Gungywamp Society in July of this year to offer recollections of the Gungywamp area from the early 1980s. Diane is the person we have on record who first noticed (c. 1980) the carving of the bird figure on one of the standing stones in the

rows of standing stones in the Gungywamp.

The Clarence Latham family once owned that part of the Gungywamp that is now owned by the YMCA. An important member of the Latham family, Louise Leake, has cherished memories of hiking through the Gungywamp, exploring the cairns and Calendar chamber and enjoying the cranberry bog. Clarence Latham often took family members young and old on his own tours of the Gungywamp, pointing out all the mysterious and interesting sites. Louise remains active in making sure the Latham land stays open and that the sites therein are protected. Currently, as previously reported in the *Stonewatch*, efforts are underway with the State of Connecticut to purchase the former Latham land from the YMCA so as to ensure that the land is preserved for future generations, as the Latham will stipulates.

Mike Gardner and his extended family who live on North Gungywamp Road also have offered their memories of the Gungywamp from years gone by. Mike, who works for Groton's Parks and Recreation department, remembers well hiking through the Gungywamp woods as a child and marveling at the many cairns and the colonial stoneworks. Mike still hikes through the Gungywamp at least two times a month. In fact, it was by Latham Pond that Mike recently proposed marriage to his girlfriend Stephanie. Congratulations, Mike and Stephanie!

Mike's aunt, Ruth Cowell Signs, also remembers her own hikes through the Gungywamp. Her father and grandfather have lived around the Gungywamp lands since the early 1900s. She and her parents and grandparents used to pick cranberries in the bogs around Latham Pond. She and her family also remembers well exploring around the cairns and colonial rock structures, puzzling over the rows of standing stones, and hiding out in the Calendar Chamber. In the 1950s, Ruth remembers seeing the large stone slab that used to cover the opening to the smaller chamber located just west of the Calendar Chamber. Ruth can also recount that there were once plans underway to put in a cranberry bog farther up along North Gungywamp Road, and that even some work was done to construct dams. But alas, those plans never came to fruition.

On Ruth's family land sets a rather large millstone-like wheel, leaning partially upright on other stones. It is approximately five feet across and eight inches thick, but with no hole in the middle, as would be typical for many millstones. One explanation given to Ruth is that the stone may be Indian in origin and could represent the moon because it faces approximately east, where the moon rises. Perhaps a more likely explanation may be that it was a millstone of a larger, more unusual type, or possibly a rolling damming stone that was intended to be used for the dams in the cranberry bogs.

Ruth has many happy memories of cranberry harvests in and around Latham Pond. She also remembers the vast farmlands and woodlands surrounding the Gungywamp area, much of which was turned into Navy housing in the early 1960s.

Both Mike and Ruth are very happy that their little corner of Groton, Connecticut has remained largely untouched by development. We have the Latham Family, the YMCA, the Vogt and Cowell families, and many others to thank for their efforts to keep the Gungywamp lands and its important historical sites maintained and preserved.

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A Winter Walk in Salem Woods by P. Buchanan

In January of this year, my husband and I went on a walk through the Cockle Hill woods in Salem, Connecticut with Jack and Jean Ann Scaduto. The Scadutos are members of the Salem Historical Society and they enjoy their retirement years hiking through the woods in their area. Jack and Jean Ann were most gracious in giving us a tour of the privately owned Cockle Hill woods.

There are many similarities between the sites in the Gungywamp and those in Cockle Hill. Both settlements date from the early to mid-1660s. Cockle Hill was settled in c. 1669 by Nathaniel Foote and others. Unlike the Gungywamp, Cockle Hill included farmland (the Gungywamp was by and large used for grazing). It also appears that one of the wetland areas of Cockle Hill may have been used as a cranberry bog, as once existed in the Gungywamp. Both the Gungywamp and Cockle Hill have impressive stone outcroppings, from which the remains of colonial quarrying can still be seen. The quarried stones in the Gungywamp and in Cockle Hill bear no drill hole markings, which is consistent with early colonial quarrying techniques.

Cockle Hill, near Route 85, has many intertwining dirt roads, kept wide today by all terrain vehicles and dirt bikes. One road, Rattlesnake Hill Road, is on record as being recognized in 1733, with a history of having been originally a footpath. Other roads include a segment of the old Governor's Highway, which had once been an Indian trail that extended from New London to Hartford and branched out to northern parts of Connecticut. Governor's Highway was so named c. 1716 when Governor Saltonstall (served 1708-1724) used the road to travel to Hartford from his home in New London.

The Cockle Hill Cemetery is off of one of the roads, and across from the cemetery are the remains of a small stone foundation. The remains of a well are near this small foundation. As Jack, Jean Ann, my husband and I examined the site, we conjectured that perhaps the small structure had been used to store the bodies of those who died during winter in anticipation of burying them in the cemetery once the ground had thawed. (The jury's still out on this theory).



Photos by P. Buchanan

Also along the intertwining roads there are numerous remains of colonial houses and other outbuildings, including what appear to be chambers/root cellars. The style of rock foundations and rock structures built into northern hillsides are very similar to those foundations and structures found in the Gungywamp.



As we walked along the many intertwining roads, I noticed the rock wall structures following the roads and wiggling off in various directions. In one case, I noticed a style of rock wall construction in which a pointed standing stone is used to serve as a brace for the wall. This method of rock wall construction was also used in some of the Gungywamp's walling system.



Photo by P. Buchanan



"Adams House," a reconstructed colonial site in the west Gungywamp complex.

Facing west, this picture shows the outside wall and the inside fireplace remains.

Numerous colonial artifacts (china, pottery, metal instruments and utensils, and two coins) have been found at this site.

Photo by P. Buchanan



The late Dave Barron at a reconstructed colonial post-colonial (early American) site in the eastern central Gungywamp complex.

Photo donated by Gungywamp member

Similarities and Differences of the Gungywamp & Cockle Hill

Gungywamp:

- Standing stone braces in rock walls
- Stone walling throughout, straight and wiggly
- Remains of chambers/root cellars/livestock birthing shelters
- Remains of colonial houses
- Stone structures built into northern hillsides, facing south
- Grazing land (most likely for sheep, perhaps cows and other livestock)
- Cranberry bog (near Latham pond)
- Carvings on stone (apparently colonial survey markings)
- Colonial mill site and stone enclosure storage areas (possibly including chambers/root cellars/livestock birthing shelters?)
- Colonial iron ore forge (operated by Gov. Winthrop's sons, 1600s)
- Indian ledge shelter, with artifacts dated c. 2000 – 500 BC

Cockle Hill:

- Standing stone braces in rock walls (fewer than in Gungywamp)
- Stone walling throughout, straight and wiggly
- Remains of chambers/root cellars/livestock birthing shelters
- Remains of colonial houses
- Stone structures built into northern hillsides, facing south
- Grazing land (sheep, cows and other livestock)

More Conclusive Research on the Rows of Standing Stones & Other Sites in the Gungywamp

by P. Buchanan

with contributions by

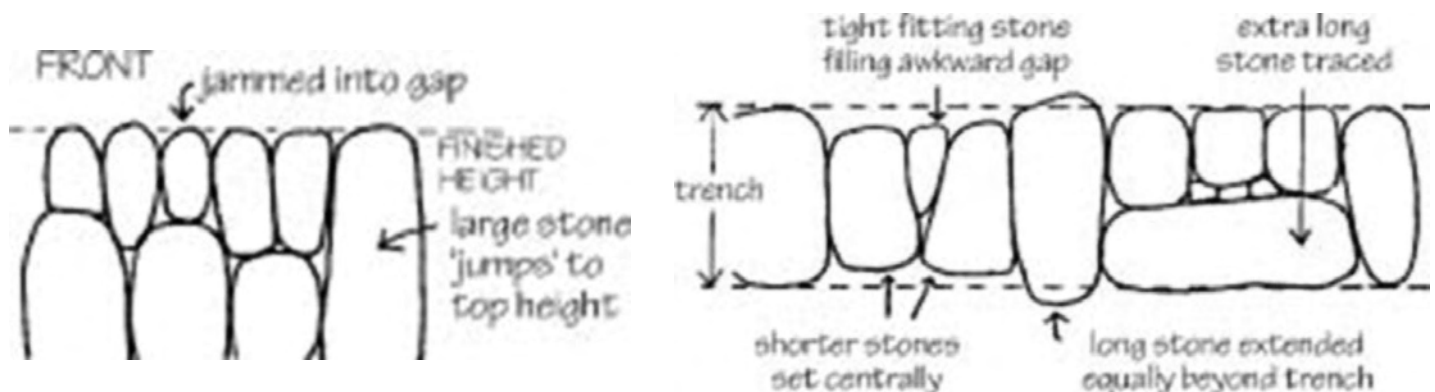
Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, J. and M. Gage,

J. Rajotte and J. Russell

On April 9th, a beautiful spring day, I met with Massachusetts son and mother researchers James and Mary Gage, Connecticut State Archaeologist Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni and his University of Connecticut student Claudette. Fellow Gungywamp board member and researcher Jack Rajotte joined us shortly after we began our hike in the Gungywamp. The purpose of our meeting was to offer updated interpretations on some of our more intriguing sites in the Gungywamp.

The two rows of standing stones along the major pathway have been a bizarre and mysterious site for generations of Gungywamp hikers. The two rows, which form a roughly east-west snaky direction, has long been conjectured to be an Indian calendar site, an Indian ritual site, a colonial memorial site, a fifth-eighth century Celtic monk site, etc. Some have argued that this or that number of upright stones could be counted in the two rows, but because the structure has been partially disturbed over the years, it is difficult to ascertain the exact number of upright stones which originally existed. Whatever the number of standing stones, my research findings make a strong argument that the rows are the remains of a type of colonial rock wall structure not uncommon to areas where livestock grazed.

The style of rock wall that uses periodic vertical bracing stones in a horizontally constructed rock wall is found in US colonial sites and in Ireland, Scotland and England. The name of this type of stone wall construction is called coping and dyking. This type of construction makes for a very stable and durable rock wall. (Illustrations from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.)



Through email correspondence, Scottish resident John Russell and I discussed the art and craftsmanship behind the construction of “dry stane dyke” walls, and the various styles of vertical bracing stones, often thin and flat and pointed-shaped at the top, that are placed within rock walls. Styles and techniques vary somewhat, but there is no doubt that the coping and dyking methods used for generations in England, Scotland and Ireland are evident in New England. And this makes perfect sense — the earliest colonists were from England, Scotland and parts of Ireland, so of course they would bring with them their knowledge and personal touches to the art of rock wall construction.

One question arises concerning why the one standing stone with the bird effigy carved into it would have been used in a rock wall structure. I offer the Yankee maxim “Use it up, make it do, wear it out” that could possibly explain the carved standing stone. Very possibly the carving could have been made in colonial times. If so, then perhaps the carver was not happy with the outcome, or the carved stone had lost its original purpose (marker stone?). In such a case, a large flat stone could still find use as a brace in a coping/dyking-styled rock wall. Dr. Bellantoni also offered his own idea about the carved outline of the bird. Since it is impossible to tell when the carving was done, it is possible that the carved depiction of the bird could have been made long after the horizontal part of the wall had been dismantled.

One other feature that John Russell described in rock wall construction was the deliberate creation of “holes” or openings as one of the features to the wall. The Gungywamp has rock walls with such openings. The BTCV Handbooks website notes that these openings in rock walls were constructed deliberately. Sheep herders have long known that as long as sheep can see what is on the other side of a rock wall then they will not jump the wall. The openings allow sheep to see the “other side” without, apparently, giving in to sheepish curiosity to bound the wall to find . . . greener pastures (?). John also noted that his ancestors and neighbors have built openings near the bottom of rock walls so as “to let the badgers or rabbits through.” These facts provide very practical explanations for the openings in some of the Gungywamp’s rock walls, with no wiggle room left to conjecture about mystical or ritualistic significance given to those openings.

One such opening in a rock wall in the Gungywamp — often referred to as the “altar bridge” — runs very close to the main path of the Gungywamp. Jack Rajotte has come across land records that refer to this path as being the “main highway” which connected the various colonial properties and led to other main roads in the area.

As described in a previous newsletter, this “altar bridge” is set into a rock wall which has some vertical bracing stones and which also incorporates a few large glacial boulders. Directly across the rock wall is a large ledge, off of which snow and rain run off. On the other side of the “altar bridge” is a pond/wetlands area. Chances are very good that these “bridges” don’t have any Celtic monk or Indian ritualistic meaning, but rather were constructed with a very practical purpose in mind: a colonial gutter system which took water run-off from the ledge and kept the highway clear of standing water.

Additional Ideas About Those Chamber Remains

While on our hike, Dr. Bellantoni offered a reasonable explanation for the smaller types of chamber remains in the Gungywamp. His knowledge and experience with colonial customs and structures lead him to believe that a number of the chamber remains could very possibly be livestock birthing shelters. There is no doubt that the Gungywamp lands were used for sheep grazing. The style and number of rock walling features in the Gungywamp are consistent with many other areas which grazed livestock. The construction of livestock birthing shelters is certainly consistent with all the other known colonial remains in the Gungywamp.

More Insights on Indian Sites

Toward the end of our hike, James and Mary Gage observed some sites which they believe are of Native American origin. Some of these sites are certainly consistent with the Indian settlements we know to exist in the Gungywamp. James and Mary have done much research on Indian and colonial sites in New England. One book they've published, and gave a copy to the Gungywamp Society, is *The Art of Splitting Stone: Early Rock Quarrying Methods in Pre-Industrial New England 1630-1825*. Mary and James pointed out an interesting site near the "Cliff of Tears" and the Indian ledge site that they attributed to Native Americans. There are three large boulders that lie in a row perpendicular to the "Cliff of Tears" and which bisect the path and a wetlands/stream which run parallel to the Cliff. On top of each boulder are piles of smaller stones, some of which have been disturbed over time, but others which are moss-covered and indicate that they've probably been on top of the boulder for a long period of time. This feature is apparently consistent with other known Indian ritual sites throughout New England.

It was a real pleasure to have Dr. Bellantoni, Claudette, and James and Mary Gage join me and Jack Rajotte on our exploratory hike through the Gungywamp woods. And we are grateful for their time and insights, and for the Gages' donation of their book to the Gungywamp Society.

STONEWATCH

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The Indian Ledge Shelter

by P. Buchanan

with contributions from articles written

by S. Mason and the late D. Barron



Indian Ledge Shelter. Photo by Steve Hart

The Indian ledge shelter in the northeast Gungywamp (on private property owned by the Vogt family) was first discovered by D. Barron in 1979. Excavations at the site began in 1980.

The Indian ledge shelter is located on a slight hill up from the major stream that runs through the Gungywamp area. The ledge shelter is a natural cave feature at the bottom of a towering rock ledge, overlooking a rather appealing “water front” area that was ideal for fishing. As with many other streams in the area, the Gungywamp stream would have been a broader stream in centuries past, with far more volume of water running through it. Development in the area over the past two centuries has significantly reduced ground water, which has in turn reduced the volume of water running through above ground streams.

Excavations begun in 1980 uncovered roughly 95 centimeters of compacted soil before bedrock was uncovered and demonstrated that there was serial occupancy by Native Americans that spanned thousands of years. Within the compacted soil were found Indian artifacts which range in date from 1600 AD near the surface to artifacts dated at being 4,000 +/- years old at the lowest level of excavation.

The artifacts found at the 1200-1600 AD level (25 cm.) consisted of Late Woodland Iroquois-styled pottery, and cedar stakes most likely used to prop up animal skins in front of the cave to provide additional shelter and living space. Early Woodland projectile points, pottery, and animal bones were unearthed inside the top layer of soil directly inside the cave. At the 35 to 50 cm. level, older forms of pottery, projectile points, hammer stones date from 770 to 500 BC. The projectile points found at this level appear to be Susquehanna-styled points, which range in their use from 1500 to 500 BC. Charcoal found at the 35 +/- cm level dates to 770 BC. The level nearest to the bedrock (95 cm) revealed only the crudest of stone flakes that had been chipped off from the making of projectile points, stone scrapers, and fire-exposed hearth stones. Connecticut State Archaeologist Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni has given an estimated date of 1500 to 2000 BC for the bedrock level.



On the left, hammer stone with carved notches for finger grips. Points (arrow heads) upper right. Pottery sherds under points and to right of hammer stone. Photo by P. Buchanan

Who Were the Native Americans In the Gungywamp Area?

The Paleo Period

Archaeological evidence indicates that the Paleo Indians settled in New England around 11,000 years ago, following migrating herds of large Pleistocene animals (mastodons and mammoths). The region was still cool, and plant life consisted of low-growing shrubs in the post-glacial tundra. As the region began to warm, the larger Pleistocene animals migrated to the cooler north, and some may have been hunted to extinction in the New England area. Hardwood forests began to emerge about a thousand years later and more animals, such as caribou, moose and deer, migrated into the area. Increasingly more nomadic Paleo Indians migrated into the area to take advantage of the good hunting conditions, and temporary fishing and hunting camps have been found along river and coastal areas. By 7000 BC it appears that a few smaller Indian groups were becoming semi-nomadic or completely settled.

The Archaic Period

Between 4600 to 2000 BC -- the Archaic period -- Native Americans in the New England region were largely nomadic and some semi-nomadic. Some Indian settlement sites from this time period have been found along river and coastal regions. Shellfish, fishbone and turtle shell debris have been excavated in these settlement sites, along with stone sinkers used with fishing nets. Based on the archaeological evidence, deer was the primary animal hunted during this period, although the bone fragment evidence also indicates that birds and domestic or wild dogs were used as a food source. Archaic Native Americans also fed on the local vegetation, such as hickory nuts, seeds and berries. Stone projectile points, hammer stones and bone needles and other tools have also been found in various Archaic period Indian sites in coastal New England. It is believed that Indians developed the dug-out canoe during the Archaic Period.

The Transitional Period

The Transitional period crosses over from the Archaic to the Woodland Periods, emerging roughly around 1000 BC. Most Indians of this time period remained nomadic hunter-gatherers. The less nomadic Indian groups settled along river and coastal areas and ate primarily seafood. Pottery techniques and styles were developed in this period of time. Burial sites indicate that elaborate rituals developed during this time period and became more important to settled Indian groups. Many artifacts have been found placed within grave sites, suggesting that the Native Americans in the New England area had a strong belief in life after death.

The Woodland Period

The Pequot, Mohegan and other Indian tribes of the Southeastern Connecticut region belong to the Woodland Indian Period. This period of time began around 1000 BC and lasted into the time of European settlement. During this long span of time, Indian groups were still largely nomadic or semi-nomadic. In the latter stages of the Woodland Period, the Indian groups began to establish permanent settlements and villages and became known by their tribal affiliations. The Algonquin language developed over this time period. Tribal territories and dynasties were established as tribes sought dominance over each other. Agriculture became a major source of food, and culturally the Indians developed more advanced tools, decorative pottery, clothing and housing. The early Europeans recorded elaborate Indian religious customs and folk tales that were passed down orally through the generations.

The Pequot and Mohegan tribes were originally one tribe which had migrated from the Hudson River Valley in present-day New York circa 1500 AD. The Mohegans broke away from the Pequots in the early 1600s due to a power struggle between leaders within the tribe. The Mohegans and other Indian tribes in the region later allied themselves with the English against the Pequots during the Pequot War of 1636-37.

In the Algonquin Indian language, "Pequot" comes from *pekawatawog* or *pequttoog*, meaning "destroyer." Algonquin dialects are shared by the Mohegans, the Niantics, the Narragansetts, and the Montauks and Shinnecocks on eastern Long Island.

In 1620 the combined Pequot/Mohegan population had numbered roughly 6,000. During the winter of 1633-1634, the Pequots were decimated by a small pox epidemic, and by the end of the Pequot War in 1637 the Pequots numbered less than 1,500. Most of the captured Pequot warriors were executed, but a number of surviving male Pequots were sold as slaves to regional Indian tribes and to European plantations in the West Indies. Women and children Pequots were given to English settlers in the area as domestic servants.

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<http://www.tauntonriver.org/paleo.htm>

https://www.colonialwarsct.org/1637_pequot_history.htm

Repair of the Large Chamber

The 2003-04 winter was a tough one, and parts of the stonework around the large chamber's entrance had collapsed as a result of the harsh winter. S. & P. Buchanan and husband and wife Steve Hart and Hope Ball repaired the entrance of the large chamber, and then enjoyed a wonderful afternoon in the Gungywamp hiking, meeting up with other hikers, and touring the various archaeological sites. Many thanks go to Steve and Hope for the great photographs and for their help with the repair work!



Photos by Steve Hart

STONEWATCH

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Earth Science Field Excursion:
The Gungywamp Complex (Fall 2005)
Logistics: N42°23'
W72°03'
Elevation: >350 feet above sea level
USGS Quadrangle: Uncasville

William J. Dopirak, Jr.
Instructor of Natural Sciences
Three Rivers Community College
Mohegan Campus
Norwich, CT 06360

The Erratics of Gungywamp



Image: Juliana Lewis

Introduction

Less than two miles east of the Thames River and five to six miles from Long Island Sound, lay Gungywamp Hill (Groton, Connecticut). This rugged-flat top hill is one of many flat top hills that contribute to a series of stepped, or shingled, kame terraces found along the southern most end of the Thames Basin (gifts from the Wisconsin glacial advance).

The Gungywamp complex is perched at the summit of the largest kame terrace (Gungywamp Hill), presently covered by a new, mixed-deciduous forest. Spanning approximately 24 acres (Whittall, 1976; Jackson *et al*, 1981), and 350 feet above sea level, there are extraordinary stone structures of unknown origin, albeit not without controversy (Jordan *et al*, 1981; Feder, 1999; Tiede and Buchanan, 2003).

Around twenty, human produced stone structures can be located, fifteen of which were found to be substantial enough to warrant further investigation (Warner, 1981). Amongst colonial-style foundations, scattered throughout the complex, are numerous stonewalls. Most of these walls haphazardly meander through the complex. Some walls form enclosures, conceivably as animal pens. Other stonewalls are fragmented and appear to go nowhere. One wall, built up the eastern hillside, is an unusual 'stair-cased' wall that is stepped up the terrain. Along the same path (to the west of the complex) there are two rows of standing capstones, with a bird of prey image carved in one of the standing stones.

Close to the rows of standing stones, on the western border of the complex there are some exits, into the bog, for runoff drainage from the hill (or entrances from the bog). Two outcrops, appearing as a stone bridge, over an apparent drainage area, suspend a large flat stone. Two piles of cobblestones, (resembling cannon balls stacked in brass monkeys on a ship), placed on top of two different outcrops, guard another entrance to the bog (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Two piles of cobblestone guarding an entrance to the bog, on the western border of the Gungywamp complex.
(Image: Juliana Lewis)

The most intriguing of the stone structures (in my opinion), are two intact, corbelled (arched), stone chambers. One coined the 'Calendar Chamber', the other is known as the 'Tomb Chamber'. The calendar chamber has a hidden, smaller, corbelled chamber within.

The earliest apparent record of the Gungywamp Complex dates back to the mid 1600's (Whittall, 1976; Barron, 1991). In a letter to John Winthrop, Jr. (dated 1654), John Pynchon reports of *"A stonewall and a strong fort in it, made all of stone which is newly discovered at or neare Pequot"*. This may refer to the Gungywamp complex, however, *'at or neare Pequot'* could have been referring to anywhere east of the Thames River, and from the sound; north to Lantern Hill and Long Pond. This area would represent where the Pequot settlement was, in the early 1600's (McBride, 1990).

It is true that most people like a good mystery, but others like to solve good mysteries, as well. Corbelled stone chambers apparently are scarce in southeastern Connecticut. Colonial root cellars (typically rectangular in shape), are more common in this region. The intent of this article is to compile documented records of the Gungywamp Complex and to inject personal remarks that may aid in the preservation of Gungywamp Hill from development.

Regional Landscape

Originating from the North Polar Region, the Wisconsin glacial advance (last ice age) began nearly 20,000 years ago. Two thousand years later, this slow moving ice sheet (averaging 3,500 feet thick), parked itself over the entire state of Connecticut and began to slowly melt. Ledyard's boulder belt (6-7 miles north of Gungywamp Hill), a bouldery moraine of glacial accumulation, is evidence of a prolonged stagnation of this massive ice sheet (Gaby, 1979; Bell, 1985).

Kame terraces can be found along steep Thames River banks (east and west), in the southernmost reaches of the Thames Basin. As this glacial ice melted, a substantial amount of water (meltwater) had carved out valleys and flattened bedrock, as it drained to the ocean, to produce delta kames and kame terraces. Kames are mounds of stratified sand, gravel, and water-worn cobblestones. Most of the areas kames have long since collapsed, but kame terraces had formed as glacial meltwater flowed through valleys of bedrock.

The regional landscape may supply chronological clues as to the origin of stonewalls and stone structures (Wessels, 1997; Foster and O'Keefe, 2000; Gardner, 2001). The topography of Gungywamp hill was dictated by glacial meltwater around 13,000 year ago (Fig. 2). At the bottom of sheer cliffs, the southeastern valley is littered with huge, striated erratics (Title image). These are true megaliths. The glacial striae (carved grooves) embedded in these erratics (stones that been deposited by the glacier, usually not part of the bedrock) would indicate a well-defined flow of extremely powerful meltwater.

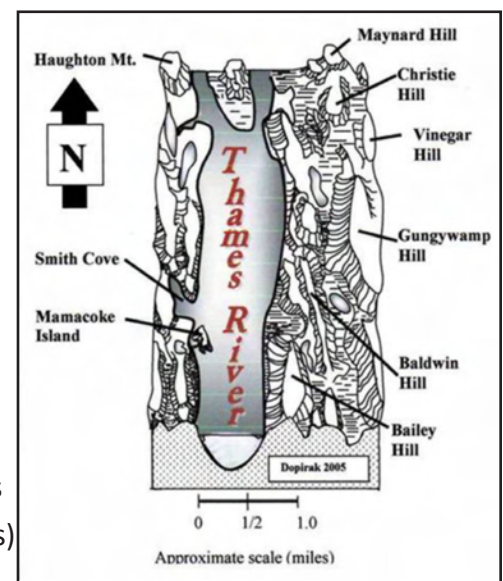


Figure 2. Glacial scouring of the lower Thames Basin bedrock, creating Delta kames and kame terraces and the topography of present day (modified from Professor Stan Gaby's block diagram).

Evidence of this immense power can be observed in the southeastern valley, where a ‘Mac truck’ size erratic is precariously perched on top of two ‘automobile’ size erratics, resembling columns supporting the larger erratic. Barron and Mason (1991), had referred to this huge erratic cluster as the “megalithic echo box”. Cleavage planes and glacial striae, in the rocks, would imply a natural formation, and a textbook example of how glacial meltwater formed this kame terrace.

There should be little doubt that this kame terrace would serve as a strategic vantage point, with its sheer cliffs and surrounding bogs. Even the United States Government recognized military advantages of this region, when they built a USN Submarine Base a couple of miles from Gungywamp Hill, in 1868 (Kimball *et al*, 2004).

The Stone Structures of Gungywamp

Throughout antiquity, humans have piled stones on top of each other. A pile of dense heavy stones, artistically placed, seems to invoke awe in some individuals. These stone piles may take form of cordial monuments, ornate stonewalls, or curious stone structures such as chambers and tunnels. Most stone structures last through many generations, and beyond. The essence of stone may be coupled with strength, power, and longevity.

Stone Chambers

The most intriguing stone structures include two corbelled chambers that have been labeled the “Calendar Chamber” (due to a shaft of sunlight, around both equinoxes, illuminating a hidden chamber: Fig. 3), and the “Tomb Chamber” (Barron and Mason, 1991; Cahill, 1993).



Figure 3. Calendar Chamber, behind the stone (to the right) lays a hidden chamber.
(Image: Bill Dopirak)

Astronomy may have contributed to the construction of the calendar chamber. Earth's axis of rotation is tilted, perhaps by some cosmic collision billions of years ago, resulting in angular fluctuations of sunrises and sunsets through the solar year (Fig. 4). The earth's tilt, or angle of inclination, although wobbling slightly, remains relatively constant as earth revolves around the sun, resulting in seasons. As far north (and south) of the equator, the rising (and setting) of the sun appears to migrate further along the eastern (and western) horizon, and seasonal fluctuations are more prevalent. Only on the vernal and autumnal equinoxes (two days of the year), will the sun rise due east and set due west.

Ancient humans were no doubt aware of the celestial movements above them, and the significance of these predictable movements. If the Gungywamp Complex is the remnants of ancient megalithic builders (Cahill, 1993), who lived on the planet 5,000 years ago and left their archaeoastronomic achievements along earth's Ley and energy lines (Miller, 2004), then why not have used the megalithic glacier erratics that form the "echo box"? With their ingenuity, hoisting the megaliths up the escarpment would not have been out of the realm of possibility. Surely it would be much more impressive with huge erratics on top of the hill.

With prevailing westerly winds, and chilly northerly winds, throughout the Gungywamp complex, coupled with the close proximity to the Atlantic ocean (and the Gulf Stream), the weather on Gungywamp Hill has likely not changed much for at least the past 6,000 years. It would be feasible to construct any dwelling structure at Gungywamp (stone or otherwise), with the entrances facing to the east or south (Fig. 5). If these chambers were used as storm-shelters, or as root cellars (to store food) through the winter to keep from freezing, the entrances should be in alignment with the east or south (and anywhere in between).

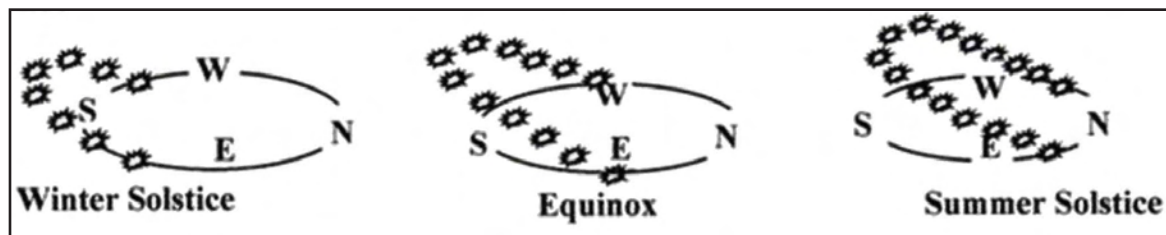


Figure 4. Angular fluctuations of sunrises and sunsets as seen from 42 degrees North latitude.
Each sun represents one hour, passing over one meridian during one solar day.



Figure 5. "Ice House" chamber (referred to as Tomb chamber by Barron and Mason), entrance facing south-southeast.
(Image: Bill Dopirak)

Root cellars are common in this area, and most of New England. Allport (1990), reminds us that it was not until the concept of ensilage (introduction of the silo), in 1880 that farmers began to store corn for livestock winter-feed. Before the use of the silo, many colonial (and post colonial) root cellars stored root crops (turnips, rutabagas, and beets) to sustain their livestock through the winter.

Shelburn (1979), reports of a stone tunnel which passes beneath Ledyard's Avery Hill Road (about six miles north of Gungywamp Hill). Barron (1984) notes stone chambers at the Hunt's Brook site, a few miles west of Gungywamp (across the Thames River, in Montville). Whittall (1986), surveyed the Hunt's Brook Chamber, a nearly 38 foot stone tunnel with an attached corbelled chamber. Perhaps these large tunneled chambers would equate to silo storage of livestock winter-feed.

Double Circle of Stones

A curious double circle of stones at Gungywamp are presumed to have been used as a bark-tanning mill (Warner, 1981; Hallas, 2003; 2004). Barron and Mason (1991), speak of a "noted NASA astronomer" (no name was mentioned), who suggested that the circle of stones might have been used as a Venus Calendar, because the western horizon and the circle of stones are in alignment (Fig. 6).

Feder (1999), dispels the mysterious circle of stones at Gungywamp as a bark mill for the extraction of chemical for hide tanning. The tannins (a plant defense compound), which were extracted from hemlock bark, was a mainstay of the tanning industry, in the 1800's (Wessels, 1997). Barks from other species of trees, particularly oak, were pulverized in similar double circled stone structures, where the channel between the rings would accept a grinding wheel. Also, according to Warner (1981), a similar double ringed structure of stones, in Bethany, CT, is listed as a bark mill in an 1838 *Guide to Connecticut: Its roads, lore, and people* (W.P.A., 1838). Apparently, another bark mill, larger than at Gungywamp, is located in Waterbury, CT (D. Suiter, personal communication).



Figure 6. Double circle of stones, presumably a "bark mill".
(Image: Bill Dopirak)

Whittall (1976) and Cahill (1993) published two separate photographs of the double circle of stones. In both pictures of the ringed walled structure, there appears a double (perhaps triple) trunked tree within the inner stone circle. Multiple-trunked trees often indicate that an old world tree that was cut there. The living stump roots can support stump shoots that grow into multiple-trunked trees (Wessels, 1997). Perhaps a three to four foot (in diameter) stump acted as a pivot point, when the mill was in operation.

The double circle of stones, and both chambers (the calendar and tomb chambers), have extensive lichen coverage. Thorson (2005), describes a brilliant classification scheme (similar to biological taxons), to ascertain a relative chronology of New England stone walls. It is challenging to categorize the walls and structures at Gungywamp using this classification method. Much more time would be needed to systemize all stone structures (including walls), in this manner. However, by quantifying all stone structures at Gungywamp, based on Thorson's (2005) classification key, perhaps a better understanding of the Gungywamp complex can be achieved.

Standing Rows of Stones



Figure 7. South row of standing stones.
(Image: Juliana Lewis)

Two peculiar rows of standing stones, are very intriguing. Two rows of standing stones, located to the west of the complex, known simply as the “north row” and the “south row”. Barron and Mason (1991), recognized that the south row is oriented towards true north, and the north row is oriented towards magnetic north. This may be true of some of the stones, but in both rows there is a slight elliptical bow (Fig. 7). Buchanan et al (2004), mentions a coping and dyking technique in the establishment of “dry stane dyke” walls. This technique employs vertical bracing stones, and apparently this method is common in England, Scotland, and Ireland (earliest colonial heritage).

Most of the stones in each row appear to be excellent capstones (to finish walls or chambers). A hired stone-mason, along with a good friend of mine, and myself constructed stone steps, welled up with three tiered patios to the right side, and a thirty foot stonewall (nearly five feet high), to the left. More than eighty tons of stone (mostly Monson and Hebron gneiss), and nearly a ton of mortar were used in this project. I realized from that experience, the best way to see the face of any stone is to stand it up, especially capstones.

Moreover, the best way to see any stone (that would be used in well-constructed walls or chambers) is to spread out or stack them up. This may account for any fragmented stonewall at Gungywamp. Any standing stone appears to have a certain mystique associated with it. Standing

stones look inspiring, and the rows of standing stones are definitely a conversation piece.

A bird image is carved into one of the standing stones. The hooked, overhanging beak would indicate a bird of prey (Fig. 8). War was not a welcomed acquaintance to Groton, Connecticut through the past four centuries. Nonetheless, Gungywamp Hill would be a perfect place for any wayward soldier (or warrior) to encamp, or act as an excellent keep (or stronghold). Perhaps a Union soldier carved an eagle in one of the stones at Gungywamp.



Figure 8. Bird effigy carved in a standing stone, resembling a bird of prey.
(Image: Bill Dopirak)

The standing stones appear to compartmentalize the earth. With wooden sides and lids, a standing row of stones conceivably could have stored different supplies or feed (purchased elsewhere). Perhaps the standing stones acted as drying racks for clothes, or for the stretching of tanned hides.

Allport (1990), refers to a 1871 Department of Agriculture report: *Statistics of fences in the United States*, the results of the survey amounted to 20,505 miles of stonewalls in Connecticut (the most of all New England at the time). Perhaps after building over 20,000 miles of stonewalls, in a state that is a little over 100 miles across (at its widest point), a little creativity was in order.



Stone bridge: apparent drainage from the north hillside into the bog. (Image: Juliana Lewis)

Conclusion

One may only imagine the thoughts of the very first visitors to this particular kame terrace, now known as Gungywamp Hill. Having little knowledge of the glacial advance that preceded them, 15,000 years ago, they must have been awe struck when scouted the southeastern valley and discovering the huge erratic cluster (“echo box”). It would be a sensible conclusion that those first people viewed this area as an important, special place. Even before any stone structures were erected, it was a place of protection and respect. Many other unique places have spawned folklores and legends, and Gungywamp is no exception. With enigmatic powers of persuasion, associated with the Gungywamp complex, legends will pursue.

However, with no solid proof of any pre-Columbian, European, or prehistoric explorers building structures of stone on Gungywamp Hill 2,000, 3,000, or even 5,000 years ago, a conclusion of little doubt may be reached. The modest evidence discussed in this article, would lean towards colonial to post-colonial construction of the stone structures at Gungywamp Hill. Nonetheless, this is our back-yard history of survival. Not only is Gungywamp a text-book example of glacial power, it should serve as a reminder of what life was like 200 to 300 hundred years ago.

Humans are very resourceful. Our ancestral survival hinged on utilization of environmental resources. Few can argue that this ancient strategy of survival was a paramount factor in the continuation of the human species. Human intuition has brought us from the “Stone Age” to the “Technology Age”. Through this journey of the ages, human nature has endured; a global transformation of the environment ensued, and is now threatening Gungywamp.



With encroaching development at its doorstep and the recent success in the “Save Our Sub’s” campaign, Gungywamp Hill may be transformed forever, either by bulldozer or vandal. Any further development of Gungywamp Hill should lie only with further archaeological research.

Scouring effects of glacial meltwater in the southeastern valley of Gungywamp Hill to create a kame terrace above.
(Image: Juliana Lewis)

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The Legend of “Old Gungywamp”

by P. Buchanan



Photo by C. Hallas

A couple of years ago, former Gungywamp Society researcher C. Hallas and I had found some information about an old colonial house called “Old Gungywamp.” It is currently located in Wallingford, Connecticut, but it had originally come from (as the name suggests) the Gungywamp section of Groton, Connecticut.

Serendipitously, a few months after Carol went to Wallingford to snap a picture of the Old Gungywamp house and try to do some research on its history, a woman named Connie Walterschied contacted the Gungywamp Society with information to share about that house. Connie Walterschied and her sister, Peggy Brobst, had grown up in Old Gungywamp during the 1930s after it had already been relocated to Wallingford. Connie and Peggy’s parents worked as domestics for the owners of Old Gungywamp.

Old Gungywamp had been built circa 1670 near the Thames River in Groton, not too far away from the Gungywamp complex. Connie passed along the lore that the house was reputed to be a “home of pirates.” In the early 1920s, Old Gungywamp was bought by antiquarian named Elmer Keith. He dismantled the house, numbered its pieces, and reconstructed the house in Wallingford, where it also became known as “the old red house.” Keith also put an addition onto the original structure. Keith rebuilt Old Gungywamp near Pond Hill House, which was built circa 1756 and is thought to be the oldest brick house in Connecticut (Historical Registry Number 74002051). Old Gungywamp was built as a saltbox style, has a center fireplace, and it has a divided basement. It is possible that Old Gungywamp was moved from its Groton location near the Thames River in the 1920s to make way for the expansion of the then small U.S. Naval Submarine Base.

We enjoy hearing from folks like Connie and her sister Peggy about interesting historical sites as they relate to

the Gungywamp complex. Their first-hand knowledge of the old colonial house known as Old Gungywamp has provided more details to the inhabitants and their houses in the Gungywamp area. If we are able to find any additional information that may surface about Old Gungywamp we will post that in future newsletters.

Hebron Excavation & Brief History

In the summer and fall of 2005, former Gungywamp Society researcher C. Hallas organized an excavation of a privately owned site in the Amston section of Hebron known as Hope Valley. Hebron is located in southern Tolland County to the north of New London County. C. Hallas' team members at the site included J. Rajotte, S. and P. Buchanan, and a number of family and friends of the property owners.

The Hope Valley area has numerous colonial house and mill sites dating back to the 1600s, as well as a church and a school. So great was Hope Valley's industrial output in the 1600s and part of the 1700s that its businesses surpassed Hartford's business output during the same period of time. According to historical records located in town offices, a number of people from the New London and Groton area settled in Hope Valley in the 1600s and into the 1800s to build homes and set up businesses. Some of the early inhabitants are Daniel Burrows, Benjamin Skinner, Peter Griffing, and David Johnson, a carpenter from New London who had come to Hope Valley with Daniel Burrows circa 1800. The Burrows family is among one of the earliest families to settle in the coastal Connecticut area shortly after its inception as a separate English colony in the 1600s.

The site where excavation was performed in 2005 in Hope Valley was of an eighteenth century farmstead. It apparently burned down and was abandoned by 1850.

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Stone Chambers as Private Ice Houses

By P. Buchanan

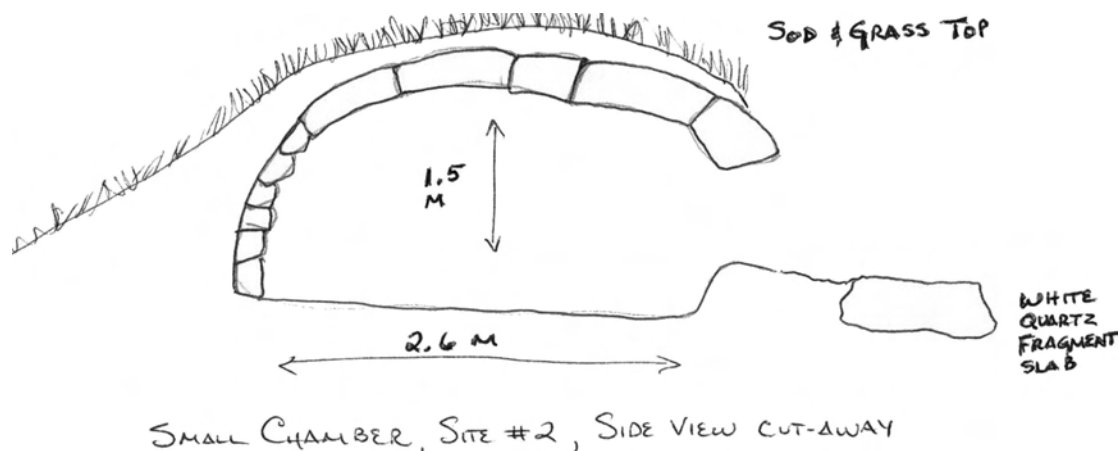
As described in other Stonewatch articles in previous years, the style of stone chambers found in the Gungywamp in Groton, Connecticut is ubiquitous throughout the northeast and eastern United States. These stone chambers were constructed by colonial and post-colonial inhabitants for a variety of reasons. Stone chambers were all-purpose facilities that were used as root cellars, small livestock birthing chambers, and were at times lived in as temporary shelters while homes were being built. In such cases, elements of the stone chamber were incorporated into the larger cellar area of the home being constructed over it or near it. Many intact and collapsed stone chambers present today are found near existing colonial and post-colonial houses or near where such structures once stood.

Connecticut writer and historian Dorothy Bennett described that stone chambers still in existence in the 1800s and into the 1900s were used for yet another purpose. In her book, *Dorothy Bennett, A Memoir*, co-authored by Harriet Rosiene and archived in the Faith Trumbull DAR Chapter House and Museum in Norwich, Connecticut, Bennett cites that farmers and large landowners would cut blocks of ice from ponds, cart the ice blocks away on horse-drawn sleds, and store the blocks of ice in their own private ice houses.

**“Most of the farmers did have an ice house where they could place the ice in sawdust
On a farm, the ice house was quite close to the well so they could wash the saw dust off”**

In the Gungywamp complex, one small intact chamber, about 50 feet away from the larger intact “Calendar Chamber,” is partially below ground and easily floods throughout the winter and early spring months. It was discovered after a hurricane in the mid-1950s uprooted a large tree that had grown over the chamber’s entrance. A largely white quartz stone acted as a door to the chamber and was uncovered by the toppled tree. Latham Pond is only a short distance down the hill from this stone chamber, therefore making this stone chamber perfect as an ice house. The stone chosen by the builders of the chamber to place at the entrance would have kept water from seeping in, and the rock’s light color stone would not have absorbed heat as a dark-colored stone would have, thereby aiding in the preservation of ice stored in this partially below ground chamber. Remnant slabs of the light-colored stone still lie on the ground at the entrance of this intact stone chamber. Even on the hottest of summer days, those who stoop through the entrance and descend about a foot below

ground level into the chamber (which is 2.6 m x 2.2 m, or roughly 8' x 6.5', with the ceiling inside the chamber measuring 1.5 m, or about 4.5') can immediately feel the drop in temperature.



Small chamber (Site 2) entrance.
Photo by Bill Dopirak

The following two pictures of stone chambers were taken on private property in Montville, Connecticut, a town across the Thames River just a little north from the Gungywamp area on the other side of the river. These chambers are near streams, old mill site remains, and other colonial/post-colonial house foundations.



Hut Chamber, Montville, CT on private property.
Photo by Bill Dopirak



**Chamber in Montville, CT
on private property.
Photo by Bill Dopirak.**



The next four pictures below are of
another stone chamber on private
property near Raymond Hill Road in
Montville, Connecticut.

**Chamber on private property near Raymond
Hill Road, Montville, CT. Note 1700s-era
house in background. Photo by P. Buchanan**



**Front view of chamber near
Raymond Hill Road on private property.
Photo by P. Buchanan**



Inside chamber near Raymond Hill Road.
Note slab roof stones and corbelled rock wall
construction.
Photo by P. Buchanan.



Back wall of chamber near Raymond Hill Road.
Photo by P. Buchanan.

More Gungywamp Memories

By John Gibson Sosman

With P. Buchanan

The Sosman family has hiked the Gungywamp since over a half-century ago. We lived nearby on Briar Hill Road. My grandfather Robert Browning Sosman was a remarkable man with a highly distinguished career in science. He was an avid hiker and lover of nature. He and his fellow hikers, including a dog named Gorgon, noted in one of their hikes in the Gungywamp the swampy valley, depressions that looked like sand pits, and stone walls, some of which may have been for screening and loading.

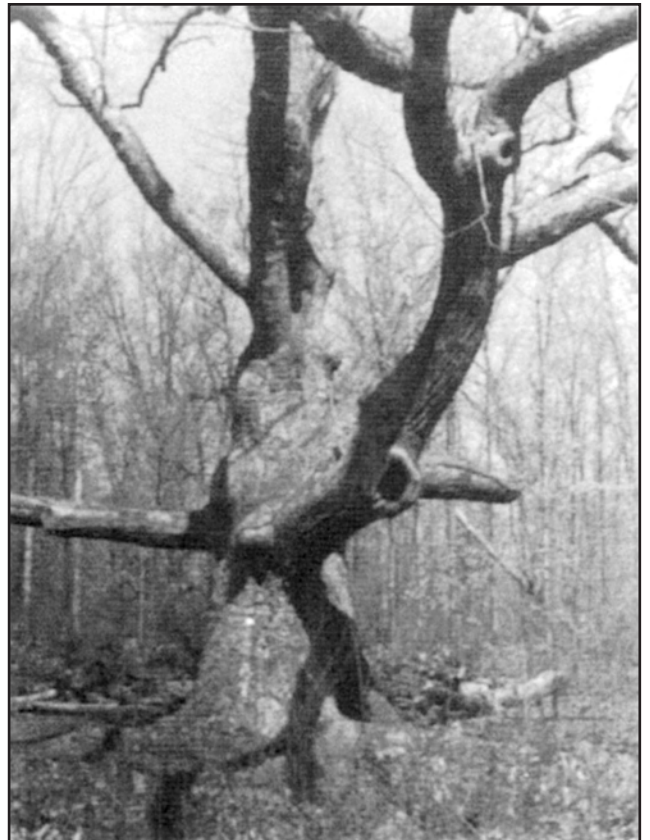
Northwest alongside Latham Bog, where cranberries once grew, was neglected. Drainage channels still showed, and an earth dam about ten feet high had decayed gates which had let the lake down nears its original swamp level, with waterlillies and other swamp vegetation. It was said to have been a duck resort but the Navy Base discovered it and supposedly killed off the ducks. An obscure trail led up the hill through the young woods, following a stone wall. Ferny damp places might have suggested some springs. The walk taken that day was about 1.6 miles.



Robert B. Sosman (middle) camping with friends, location unknown, c. 1930s.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s I took many hikes around the Gungywamp area. I saw the standing stones and I went inside the stone dome structure (the large Calendar Chamber). I also visited what was known as the Ledyard or Uncas Oak, a bit north of the Gungywamp:

Ledyard or Uncas Oak, c. 1966-68. Trunk about 8' diameter.



Odell and Willard Shepard wrote about the Ledyard or Uncas Oak in their wonderful novel, Holdfast Gaines (a must-read for anyone with a love for the Gungywamp area). Odell Shepard wrote something to the effect that the Ledyard or Uncas Oak had only been a sapling when Columbus sailed in 1492. He also wrote that it had only survived in colonial times because it had “defied the axes and saws” of the local woodsmen and shipbuilders. It was (or so I read) a hard white oak and very large. It is said to have been a kind of holy place for the Pequots and Mohegans back in the 1600s and 1700s. The tree was said to have been located somewhere quite near the original site of the Pequot Council Stones.



The photo of the boulder -- a boulder with a face -- was taken by me during my hiking days in the Gungywamp. I used to fantasize that it was an ancient Indian face, turned to stone by some ancient primeval woods-magic. The boulder is known commonly as Echo Rock because the voices of those who speak into its crevices are said to echo and be heard at greater distances than one might expect.

**Echo Rock, on SE side of Gungywamp near YMCA camp.
Picture taken c. 1966-68**

I now live in Kansas, but reading all of the information about the Gungywamp makes me ache for its forests and the rural Ledyard where I used to hike many miles in my childhood and as a young adult with my best friend. I hope the Gungywamp will never be developed but be protected as a nature preserve.

. . . And More Gungywamp Memories

By Steve Ray

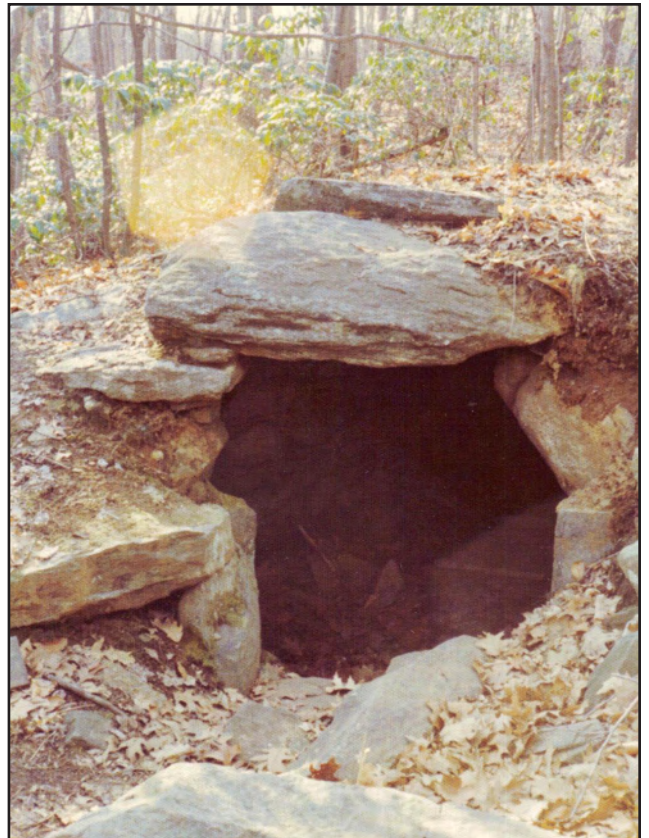
I read with interest the web site of the Gungywamp Society. I thought you might be interested in some pictures I took of one of the caves and the rock circle in 1976. I was in the Navy and lived on Gungywamp Road, right across from the area of interest. I spent many hours hiking and cross-country skiing the trails in the YMCA area in 1975-1977.



Tan Bark Mill Site, c. 1976.
Photo by Steve Ray.



Small Chamber (Site 2).
Note the large light colored slabs
at entrance of chamber.
Photo by Steve Ray.



Entrance of Small Chamber (Site 2). Photo by Steve Ray.

Black Government in Colonial New England

By M. Whatley

In Colonial times, there was a lesser known practice occurring in the New England states. Black Governors and Kings were elected. They were called “kings” in some locations, and “governors” in other states.

According to his book *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*, William D. Piersen writes:

In Connecticut and Rhode Island, where white citizens were permitted to choose their own governors in the colonial era, black rulers were elected and, like their white counterparts, usually called governors; whereas in the royal colonies of New Hampshire and eighteenth-century Massachusetts, where white governors were appointed, the elected Negro leaders were called kings.

The first election of this type was held in about 1756 in Newport, RI, and was in place in Hartford, Connecticut by 1766. These governors were more of a local jurisdiction figurehead, than a state-wide governing position. They were more of a community leader than a politician. They presided over weddings, burials, and helped to settle disputes.

Norwich, Connecticut boasted at least two of these leaders. One of these Governors was Boston Trowtrow. He served a two-year term as Governor, beginning in approximately 1770. He is buried in the Norwichtown Cemetery, in Norwich. His surname, Trowtrow seemed to indicate that he was African born.

The other black Governor from Norwich was Sam'l. Huntington, slave of Samuel Huntington, the future president of the Continental Congress. Sam'l. Huntington served from 1772-1800. The Governors were a reflection, in most cases, of their owners. The owner would have had money to outfit and provide the horses and provisions for the black governor, especially for “ ‘Lecture Day”, and in most cases, were those with considerable local political clout, such as Samuel Huntington.

From an online article from the Christian Science Monitor, Oct. 29, 1997 edition, entitled *Chronicling Black Lives in Colonial New England*, Lee Lawrence writes about the day these leaders were elected.

... known as ‘Lecture Day, a ritual that first appeared around 1750 and continued in some areas for a full century. While their owners were busy casting ballots in Colonial elections, blacks gathered for a mixture of fun and politicking, culminating in voting and a flashy inaugural parade. Once dismissed as a childish parody of white elections, ‘Lecture Day has come to be seen as an important political and social phenomenon that blended African and American traditions.

In 1905, the Connecticut Magazine had an article about these black leaders and included an illustration. The picture created quite a quandary for the historical society of Hartford historians and the directors of the exhibition. It was a painting by H.P. Arms, and was entitled “The Parade of the Black Governor of Hartford”. It shows a man (unnamed) riding a horse, formally dressed, including a top hat and a sash, and leading a parade. The problem with that picture is that the Governor is portrayed with huge white lips. They decided to use the picture, with revisions. This created quite a debate. In the picture, they darkened the lips for the exhibition, but in a brochure produced for the exhibition, the picture was altered differently. This time he had the white lips, made smaller, and more beard. There were approximately 31 of these black leaders that served their communities. This spanned about 100 years, from about 1750 to approximately 1855. The last governor was probably Wilson Weston from Seymour, Connecticut, who was elected in 1855.

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2007-2008 Excavations in the Gungywamp

By P. Buchanan

For years, whenever we have given tours throughout the Gungywamp, we have passed by a small ledge area in the northwest section that has stood out as a very likely spot for another Indian site. It is only about 15 feet off the path and it is smaller than our more “famous” Indian ledge site pictured below, which is roughly 200 yards away from the smaller ledge.



Indian Ledge Shelter. Photo by Steve Hart (Fall 2004)

After years of passing by the smaller ledge site and taking a mental note of “we’ve gotta dig there sometime to see if anything can be found,” we finally organized an excavation last year and hit gold (well, so to speak).

As seen below, we opened up two excavation squares, 3 x 3 feet each. There was a number of small rocks dug up which had broken off from the ledge roof above or washed down from the sloping hillside on either side of the small ledge. There was also one large boulder which had to be removed.



New ledge site, looking north (Fall 2007)

New ledge site, looking south (Fall 2007)

Photos by Scott Buchanan

The sifter was just about ready to be dumped when a small white quartz Indian point (arrowhead) was found, measuring just over an inch in length. The point had come out of Pit 2, at a depth of 4 inches. This was the evidence we needed to confirm that this smaller ledge demonstrated an Indian presence in or around this site. The presence of the small white quartz point could indicate that the ledge was used by Indians as a hunt site and shelter. The quartz point could have been purposely discarded or accidentally left behind. Or, the quartz point could have originated from a wounded small game animal (such as a squirrel, raccoon, or opossum) that had been shot by an Indian but had escaped capture and sought shelter in the ledge. If an animal had been wounded by the quartz point it could have either chewed away its flesh to dislodge the point (if the point was not deeply imbedded in the animal), or the wounded animal could have died in the ledge with the point imbedded in its body.



Indian point found at new ledge site (side A)



Indian point found at new ledge site (side B)

Photos by Scott Buchanan

Several bits of charcoal were also found, but because of the history of fires in the Gungywamp, these bits of charcoal could have originated from root burn. Consequently there will not be any carbon dating of the charcoal since there is no way to indicate if they originated by campfire or by forest fire.

Connecticut State Archaeologist Nick Bellantoni has been updated on our work and discoveries at this new site of excavation in the Gungywamp. The Gungywamp Society will continue its excavation at this ledge site throughout 2008 and most likely into 2009.

Regional Stone Structures: **Goblin mines of Chatham, a Stone Tunnel, and the Hopemead Chamber**

William J. Dopirak, Jr.

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Three Rivers Community College

Spring 2008

Cobalt mine: Cobalt, CT

Just outside of Connecticut valley, in a town formerly known as Chatham, CT (known now as Cobalt), lies the ruins of an abandoned mine. Just east of Portland, roughly one mile north of route #66, at the eastern foot of Great Hill, open mines shafts, tunnels (Fig. 1), and stone structures are all that remain.

Rare ores have been taken from this mine. Gov. John Winthrop, Jr., in the late 1600's, reportedly extracted gold from this mine (Pawloski, 2006). Harte (1944), reports Governor Winthrop smelted enough of the gold to make a ring. Great hill was formerly called "The hill of the Governor's ring."

Trapp (2001), refers to John Winthrop, Jr. as an alchemist, who once collected an unusual rock from New London; he called this columbite. Nearly 200 years after, Charles Hatchett (1801) analyzed the specimen, to discover a new element called Columbium (Cb = #41)

In an *American Mineralogist* article, published in 1921, Earl V. Shannon mentions that this mine is one of the many diverse types of metal deposits in New England. Nickel, iron, sulfur, zinc, cobalt, chathamite, and gold were reportedly extracted from this mine. Three German immigrants opened the mine in the mid-1700's and shipped most of the ore to England and China.

Referred to as "The Goblin mines of Chatham, Connecticut," this productive mine was in operation from 1762 to 1850. When cobalt is extracted from this ore, through smelting processes, it creates an 'evil odor.' The name 'Cobalt' derived from the German word '*Kobold*.' This word appears in German Folklore. Kobold was an evil sprite (apparently where goblins and gremlins originate from). German miners saw this ore as troublesome and worthless, until its uses were fully known.

In 1780, the element Cobalt was recognized as Co = #27. Cobalt ore is coupled often with sulfides and arsenides (arsenic derivatives). This 'Kolbold ore' was first used to color pottery and glass. Low grade ore was also found to counteract the yellowing of laundry (Trapp 2001). Cobalt sulphate today is used in electroplating, in batteries (Hayashi et al. 2003), and as a drying agent in 'fast-dry' paints and varnishes.



Fig. 1. Abandoned mine, extending over 120 feet; a) looking in, b) looking out. (Images: Bill Dopirak)

There are (at least) three vertical mine shafts within the complex (Fig. 2.). Two of which apparently were directly associated to the mine that exploited a large deposit (vein) of cobalt.



Fig. 2. One of a few abandoned mine shafts of Cobalt Mine. All vertical shafts have been fenced in. (Images: Bill Dopirak)



Fig. 3. Cobalt Mine ruins. Stone aisles would accept miner carts. (Images: Bill Dopirak)

The vertical mine shafts (above) are adjacent to stone channels, or aisles, to accept mining carts and wooden scaffoldings (Fig. 3). Flanking the ruins of the stone aisles is a large stone wall that is embedded at the top of three tiers (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. The ruins of a mine that had exploited a vein of cobalt ore. Image: Bill Dopirak

The Cobalt Mine ruins are terraced. This would imply it to be an elevation mine (Fig. 5). The cobalt ore would be taken out of a shaft (or tunnel) and brought to the highest point of a wooden structure for processing. Gravity would ease the transport through the different levels of the mine, and the smelting processes to purify the cobalt.

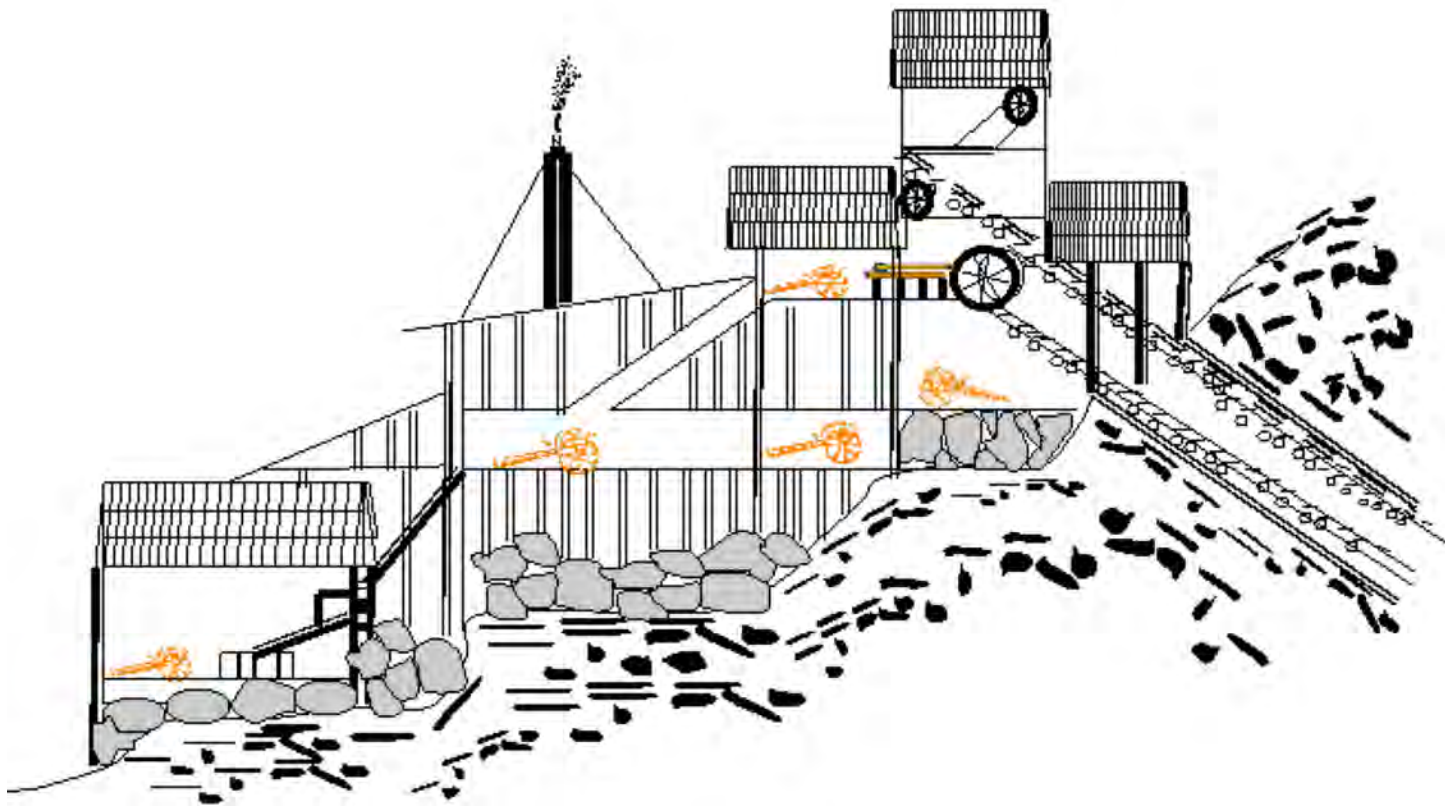


Fig. 5. Proposed diagram of “the Goblin Mine of Chatham, CT.”
Redrawn from a sketch of *Old Mine Park in Trumbull* (F. Chesson and Hobbs, 1901: In, Pawloski 2006).

Stone Tunnel under Avery Hill Road: Ledyard, CT

A 20+ foot stone tunnel can be found under Avery Hill Road, in Ledyard's Glacial Park (Fig. 6). The exact origin and purpose for this tunnel remains a mystery. Perhaps the tunnel was built by the earliest inhabitants of this area and used as storage for winter livestock feed. Perhaps this stone tunnel was part of the "underground railroad," where southern slaves took refuge. The only record found of it mentions, "Perhaps used as a cattle crossing" (Shelburn1979). However, due to the small dimensions of this tunnel, it seems unlikely for cattle (Fig. 7). Sheep could have used this tunnel for crossing.

Mysterious stone chambers can be found all over this area. Hunt's Brook on Fire Street, in Montville, has quite a few chambers of unknown origin. In addition to stone chambers the enigmatic Gungywamp Complex hosts a variety of human produced stone structures.



Fig. 6.
Stone tunnel under Avery Hill Road, in Glacial Park (Kettlehole site)



Fig. 7. "Glacier" and "Hilde" leaving the stone tunnel

Hopemead State Park & Recreation Area: Montville, CT

Hopemead State recreation area is owned by the State of Connecticut and is situated on the Montville shores of Gardner Lake. Gardner Lake is a naturally formed lake. The Honey Hill fault line runs directly under the lake that displaced the land below the water table. This is the same fault line that is in close proximity to Gungywamp Hill, and may be responsible for any magnetic anomalies there.

According to Chase (2004), early records refer to Gardner Lake as "Oplinsk," but it was more commonly known as "Twenty-mile Pond." On a 1780 map of Salem, Gardner Lake is referred to as Mason Lake (Corriveau 2006).

A well-constructed stone chamber (root cellar) can be found in Hopemead Park, on Gardner Lake (Fig. 8). Bellantoni et al. (1996), recommended that all stone structures (within the Hopemead complex) remain intact until historical research and archaeological testing can be determine whether these features are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No present listing can be found in the National Register.



Fig. 8.
Hopemead Chamber on Gardner Lake

(Images: Bill Dopirak)



Fig. 9.
Located on the East-Northeast Shore of Gardner Lake, with its Southerly facing entrance, this chamber is a chief candidate for acting as a colonial icehouse.

This stone structure was apparently used as storage for winter livestock feed. The close proximity to Gardner Lake would provide easy harvesting of ice (Fig. 9).



a)



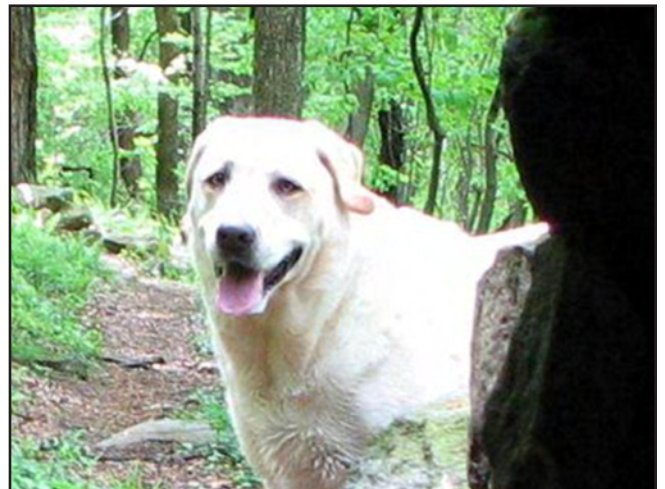
b)

Fig. 10. Inside the Hopemead Chamber. a) Outside looking in b) Inside looking out
Images: Bill Dopirak

("Glacier" outside of the Hopemead chamber)
Glacier (1997-2008)

You have brought me to places that I never would have traveled.

Thank you my friend.



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Gungywamp Adventures

By Carol Kimball

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and the editors at *The Day* newspaper

Published in *The Day* 1/14/08

Isolated Gungywamp in northwest Groton displays irregular ridges, scattered colonial sites, meandering stone walls and some mysterious stone remains. Interspersed with bog and swamp, the land has remained undeveloped for centuries.

Thanks to research by Nancy and George Jackson and Bill Linke, we know that Nathaniel Adams Sr., purchased 53 acres there in 1739. In the next century the Latham family acquired that land from Nathaniel's grandson Samuel. Clarence Latham and his sister Elizabeth, who received the property from their father in 1888, bequeathed it to the New London YMCA in 1937.

Clarence Latham cherished his cranberry bog on his Gungywamp property. Cranberry vines persist to this day along the edges of the old YMCA basketball court. We also have Latham Lake on the site to remember the family.

Before Gungywamp belonged to the YMCA its rugged terrain was a magnet for Groton youth, including the three Trail brothers, 16-year-old Henry Spicer Trail, 10-year-old John, and Dick, 8. Their father had a woodlot there. Henry, the oldest, called "Spike," was a Boy Scout. He spent summers with Mohegan sachem Harold Tantaquidgeon, wearing a beaded breast plate and a loin cloth. Spike made cornmeal using a mortar and pestle, learned Indian dances and some of the language and called himself "Rising Sun."

When Grandma Spicer was bedridden with a stroke in 1935 she gave 16-year-old Spike her Nash touring car, complete with running board. The three brothers set off in the car for Gungywamp. Spike was a patient big brother who enjoyed caring for the younger boys. He let 8-year-old Dick drive the Nash up dangerous Crooked "S" Hill. Dick remembers that he had to stand up to touch the gas pedal. On the narrow wooded road he ripped a fender off the Nash, but Spike just said, "Don't worry about it; we'll get it on the way back."

The trail boys often camped out at Gungywamp, first in a lean-to Spike built, and later in an Indian longhouse. Finally they constructed a 16-foot-square cabin on a hillside in the middle of the Gungywamp, using slabs from a nearby sawmill. For heat they built a large fireplace. They found a stone slab 6 feet long, 3 feet wide and 18 inches thick for the hearthstone, hauling it up the hill with the faithful Nash. They cut small logs for rollers and put them under the slab to move the stone along while Spike drove. They had to cut an opening in the cabin to get the stone inside.

The fireplace was flagstone and they invested in a clay flue. To fit it they broke through the roof. While mixing cement for the thin, flat flagstones they ran out of water, but they solved the problem by urinating into the bucket to wet the mixture. To finish the job they added a loft above the fireplace for sleeping, which proved to be very warm for winter camping. Sadly the cabin later burned in a forest fire. Spike, an Air Force veteran of World War II, died in New Hampshire in 1991.

Another Groton youth, Don Smith, who grew up on Thames Street, enjoyed camping beside the lake at Gungywamp in the 1940s after the property had been deeded to the YMCA. With permission from the director he went there, riding his bike to the site. He remembers a dirt lane which led back to the dam. At one end of the dam was a concrete assembly grooved to allow ten foot boards to be slipped in to control the lake level. He often stopped to talk with an old man who lived in a small shack. Don was careful to wear boots on those camping trips; he saw snakes which he thought were copperheads. Years later, in 1951, Don tried to check out his old Gungywamp haunt but a watchman refused to allow him on the property.

Gungywamp is posted now, with trespassing forbidden. I've heard that much of the land may be acquired by the State of Connecticut for preservation. That would be a happy solution.

Stonewatch editor's note: We wish to thank Carol Kimball for her article and for her permission to reprint the article in our Stonewatch newsletter. Members of the Gungywamp Society have written permission from the YMCA and verbal permission from the surrounding long-time landowners to take tours and conduct excavations in the Gungywamp lands. We do urge caution that there is one landowner on the far north end of the Gungywamp who requests that no visitors come onto his property. For that reason, those interested in participating in tours or excavations of the Gungywamp (or who likewise have permission from the landowners), should contact the Gungywamp Society and Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center to arrange a date. At one time we tried to cease giving tours because of busy schedules, but we've kept getting so many requests that we had a hard time saying "no" to folks! We are now teamed up with the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center to offer occasional tours throughout the year.

Regarding Ms. Kimball's mention of the YMCA's part of the Gungywamp land possibly being acquired by the State of Connecticut, for several years Gungywamp board member and researcher Paulette Buchanan has stayed in good contact with the head of the State's Land Acquisition Office and, as of 2007, the land transfer is still being considered but that there are technicalities that have yet to be worked out. That, in addition to the State's budgetary concerns, may result in more delays in the YMCA land transfer of the Latham estate to the State. In any case, what is most important is that the Gungywamp lands and their important historical sites have remained preserved, and that is the primary mission of the Gungywamp Society and the land owners of the Gungywamp.

